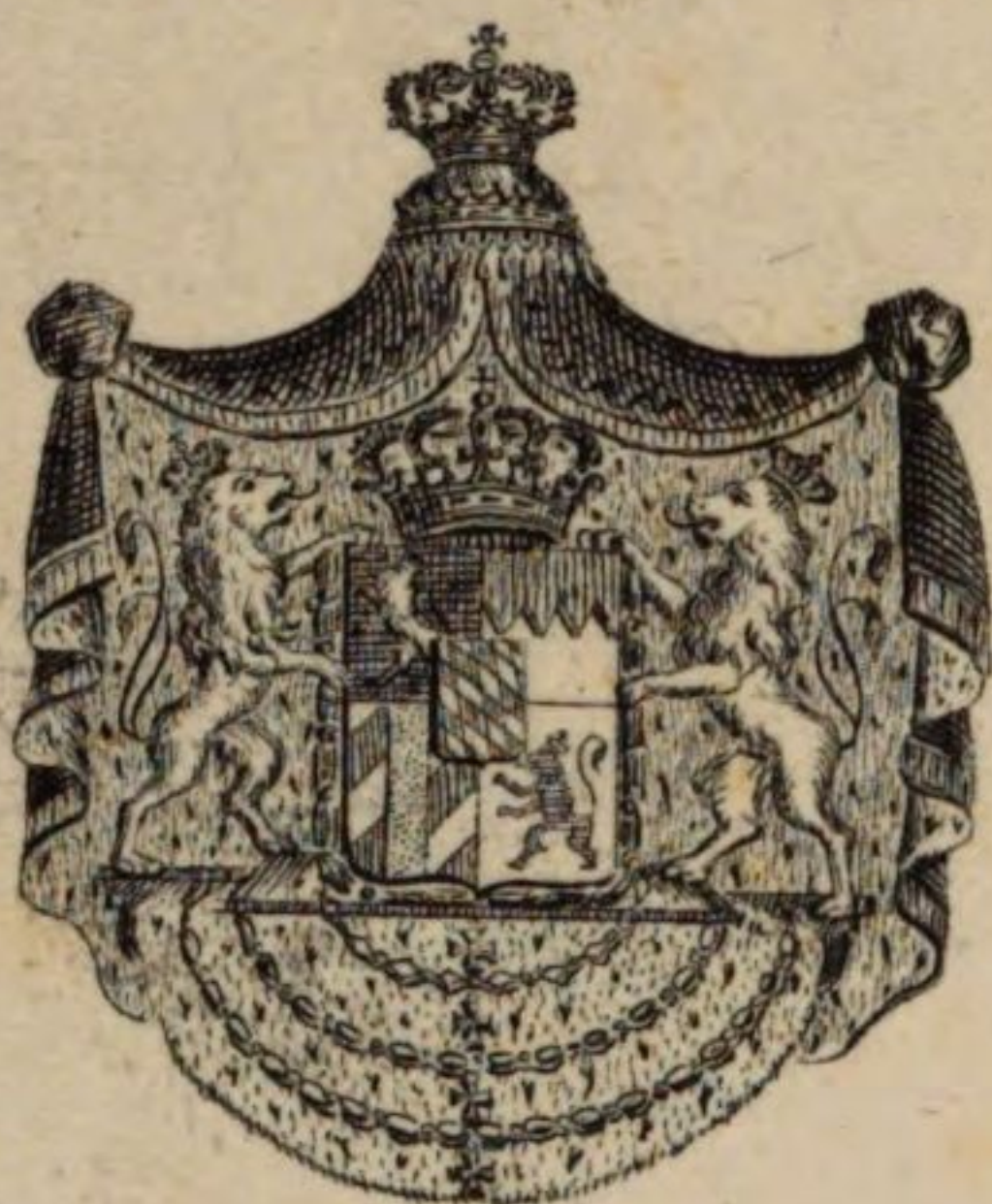




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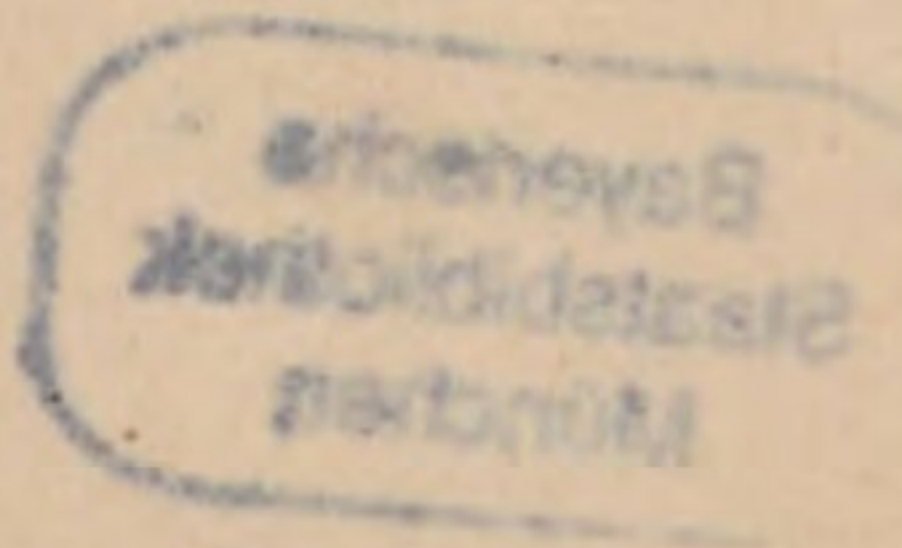
COMPRISING
WORKS

BY THE
**MOST POPULAR AND FASHIONABLE WRITERS
OF THE PRESENT DAY.**

IN FIFTY VOLUMES.

VOL. XXIII.

LONDON:
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NEW BRITISH NOVELIST

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OF THE PRESENT DAY

IN FIFTY VOLUMES

THE END

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NEW BRITISH NOVELIST

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THE
LAST BARON OF CRANA.

TALE I.

VOL. I.

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THE

LAST BARON OF CHINA

TALE I

11

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THE
LAST BARON OF CRANA.

CHAPTER I.

THE battle of Aughran had been proceeding from daybreak till six o'clock, and was still undecided, although victory seemed wavering to the side of the unhappy Stuart. His French commander-in-chief, the brave and experienced, though conceited, St. Rothe, with a force much inferior in discipline to that which he opposed, had repulsed the whole day the charges of Ginkle's veteran army, made up of troops of many warlike nations. St. Rothe's excellent position greatly assisted the desperate courage of his native Irish soldiers.

In his front, which fully occupied an unequal and broken hill, stretched a bog, scarce pass-

able: his right was strongly entrenched; his left rested on the castle of Aughran. The cavalry of William repeatedly failed in their attempts to force either of the two last-mentioned points; and his infantry were equally unsuccessful in trying to shake the former.

As twilight drew on, Ginkle prepared to pause or retire; but a second and more fortunate thought prompted him to order a fresh assault, covered and supported by field-pieces, upon the Irish right. His historians say, that "it was not without the most surprising efforts of courage and perseverance they at length obliged the enemy to give ground, who, even then, lost it by inches." St. Rothe detached succours from his centre and his left to assist the disputed point. His antagonist, observing this movement, ordered the positions so weakened to be also attacked, and again the battle became general.

While the discharges of artillery shrouded the combatants at the wing which it was brought to attack, Dutch, English, Danish, and French Huguenot cavalry were seen, at full gallop skirting the edge of the bog, to charge the left of the opposite army; and long lines of in-

fantry, broken and straggling, and wading breast-high through water and mud, appeared, making slow and toilsome way over the morass, bent upon a final and desperate onset on St. Rothe's centre. These last continued distinctly visible until they gained the base of the confronting eminence; for, owing to the difficulties and labour of their progress, no smoke from their own firelocks enveloped them. But the enemy they struggled to reach did not remain so exposed to view. Almost without a chance of retaliation, they discharged well-aimed volleys at their brave enemies, of which the thick white smoke soon hid their whole body; and the fierce flash, flash, unceasingly darting out of the opaque vapour, and the frequent breaks thereby occasioned in the tortuous line of the assaulters, alone told, like thousands of fiery tongues, that death dwelt within the cloud which sat on Kircommadon-hill.

It was now indeed a scene of quick and sharp action, and of panting interest; and the dulled sun seemed fitly preparing to sink behind Aughran castle, amid black wreaths of vapour, which waited to eclipse him, as the issue of the struggle he overlooked was doomed

to obscure the fortunes of one or other of the princes in whose names arose the shouts of onslaught.

It has not been intended to attempt a full or detailed picture of the celebrated battle of Aughram. Allusion is made to it only for the purpose of distinguishing among the *melée*, at a particular moment, two rival combatants; and the reader now arrives, by this hasty and partial sketch, at the point of time required.

The attack of Ginkle's cavalry upon the Irish left had failed. The infantry sent through the bog effected, notwithstanding the accumulated impediments of their way, a landing at the base of Kincommadon-hill, and charged up to St. Rothe's centre. The rugged eminence was crossed with hedges and ditches, occupied by musketry, and they were quickly driven back, however, dispirited, and at a great loss. The Irish pursued them half-way across the morass, and, better acquainted with the difficulties of the ground, continued to inconvenience them. Shouts of triumph arose over the hill; and while Ginkle's army remained silent, St. Rothe seemed preparing, by a general movement, to, as he vauntingly expressed it, "drive the English to the gates of Dublin."

The affair in the morass became a mere scramble; man encountering man, and almost by strength of hand alone, deciding each other's fate. Indeed, few but the officers of either side could set their chance of life and death upon a more warlike struggle; they however, still able to use a sword above their heads, although sunk in mud and water, often met in gallant encounter. From amongst others are selected an officer of one of Sarsfield's regiments, on the Irish side, and an officer of the Enniskilleners, on the English side. The former was a man of advanced age; the latter some ten years younger. When they singled each other out in the middle of the bog, these antagonists had just partially extricated themselves from deep immersion in a pool, and stood, front to front, foot to foot, eye to eye, point to point, upon the only comparatively firm patch of soil within some distance. Uttering no language save that conveyed in the mutual flashing of their eyes, their swords instantly crossed and clattered. After a few parries, the Enniskillener, by an oblique up-cut, struck off the Jacobite's perforated iron cap, or "pott," and quickly following up his success, slightly wounded him through the folding skirt of his highly-wrought buff coat, in the right

thigh. This fired as well as made free with the Milesian's blood, and furiously closing his enemy, he struck the sword from his hand, and pushed him on his knees. "Rescue or no, my prisoner!" then cried the victor.

"Quarter or no quarter, still your mortal foe!" answered the half-prostrate man.

"Say not the words again," resumed the Irish officer, raising his sword; "the times seldom afford the choice I tender you; besides, look over the bog—the day is ours."

"It shall never be yours, slavish Papist!" persisted the vanquished Enniskillener.

"Nor yours, then, false traitor!" retorted the other, and he drew back his arm to prepare it for a thrust. Meantime, many soldiers of his regiment had gathered round, and, half-way raised above the morass, looked on in triumph. The prisoner suddenly sprang upon his captor, and seized his right arm; they closed, wrestled, and Sarsfield's officer was flung off the patch of turfy soil into the black water. When he recovered his momentary confusion, he saw that his men had seized upon his antagonist, and were proceeding to dispatch him. A sudden recollection of the Enniskillener's bravery aroused his soldierlike feelings, and he cried out, in

tones of command and threat, to have the officer's life saved; at the same time scrambling amongst them, and forcing the men from their prey.

"Well, I am your prisoner now, and on your own terms," said the rescued man; "though I little thought that a Jacobite could ever make me say so."

"Or I, that any abettor of the Dutchman could so well deserve the honour of being protected by Sir Redmond O'Burke," replied his captor.

"We have heard of you, Sir Redmond," and the conquered party slightly touched his hat; "My name is Miles Pendergast, of Pendergast-hall."

"A stout rebel, as I have ever heard, and, as I now bear witness, a courageous gentleman," replied Sir Redmond, bowing a return to Pendergast's salute: "but we waste some time here; I crave your company back to the hill, whence, after safely and honourably bestowing you, I may again engage in my duties."

"Come—but it seems like as if some new fortune has chanced," said Captain Pendergast, looking around him, at all sides.

"Oh, nothing but King James's army in

full motion to pursue your general," answered Sir Redmond.

"Nay, by St. George, you mistake now!" continued the prisoner, his manly eye and cheek glowing with the reflux of hope and anticipation.

He augured aright. The tide of battle had again turned. An ally of Ginkle arrived unexpectedly upon the field, rallied the broken and retreating soldiers, once more urged them across the bog, and the Irish were now flying in their turn back to Kircommadon-hill; flying, indeed, although the military word, is a bad one to describe their progress through the morass.

"I am mistaken, truly," said Sir Redmond O'Burke, as irregular groups of his own men floundered past them, pronouncing the word, "reinforcement!"

"And what now, Captain Pendergast?"

"Your prisoner, still, according to the terms," answered Pendergast; "and let us gain your position while we can do so, in company with your own soldiers."

"Agreed; but must it indeed be in their company?" looking anxiously and spiritedly over the bog towards Ginkle's side of it; "Must the fellows return with us? can they not be ral-

lied?" he continued, talking to himself; "Halt! stand! but no;" the fugitives increased in numbers, and pressed on to the hill with greater energy; and the shouts of the English rose high, and came near. "No, not this moment;—so, come, Sir!"

The English and the Irish officer gained the eminence that arose almost from the verge of the morass; here they found the soldiers who had passed them, again formed in steady array; those who arrived with them rapidly fell in with their comrades; others, who every instant followed, as readily re-occupied their former posts; an infantry reserve, who had not quitted the hill, joined all; and in a very short space of time, a formidable centre was once more opposed to the renewed attack of the English force.

"I fear you cannot get out of danger till this fresh bout be over," said Sir Redmond to his prisoner: "yonder is my regiment, and if I defer joining it, in order to place you at the rear, 'tis like to have the honour of a tenth time helping to check the Dutchman, without my humble aid—See! here splash your friends, by Heaven and good St. Patrick! Provide for yourself, Sir!" and Sir Redmond, cheering,

and waving his sword, ran to head his little band, who received him with answering cheers.

Captain Pendergast's first impulse, at being thus left alone, almost at the base of the eminence, and some distance from the Irish centre, was to rush to meet his friends at the verge of the bog, which the foremost of them had already gained. But a manly sense of honour forbade him, when he recollected the pledge he had given to his captor ; and gratitude for life preserved at that captor's hands, farther determined him to act a neutral part. His next anxiety was, naturally enough, to remove himself out of peril from a contest in which he could take no share ; and, glancing around him, he jumped into a ditch, now unoccupied by the Irish, and removed from the course which, most probably, the English army would take in their charge up the hill.

But he could observe, conveniently and without notice, from his position in the ditch, all that followed. Nor had he to wait long for matter to interest him. For at least the tenth time, as Sir Redmond O'Burke had intimated, Ginkle's infantry, now chiefly composed of fresh men, bounded out of the morass, and scrambled, shouting, up to the Irish centre. They were

received with undiminished fury and bravery, and repulsed more than once, although now their opponents did not quit the hill to pursue them. The adverse lines often intermixed however, and pressed each other back and forward, on the contested ground, sometimes coming close upon Pendergast's place of concealment. At last, he recognised the regiment which Sir Redmond had pointed out as his, hastily occupying a position very near to the ditch, in order, along with others, to prepare for continued contest; and he could see that officer waving his hat to his men, and hear him exhorting them to stand fast. Simultaneously, cheers, that he knew to be from his friends, arose upon the Irish left; and, in a few minutes, an aid-de-camp rode up to Sir Redmond O'Burke, bearing him orders to fall back to his first position, and help to concentrate the centre; adding, that some cavalry had just turned their left, and were advancing, along the edge of the bog, to support Ginkle's infantry: "When your lads are in line, Sir," continued the aid-de-camp, "the Commander-in-chief would speak with you; and think nothing of this, Sir Redmond; the day is ours yet;" and he rode off.

While Sir Redmond's regiment was in the

act of wheeling round to obey, at his word of command, the orders received, some of the men spied Captain Pendergast in the ditch, and presented their firelocks at him. He cried out, and again owed his life to the interference of their Captain, who now requested the prisoner to take a place at his side.

Accordingly, at a brisk pace, Pendergast kept close to his captor. They gained their position; Sir Redmond wheeled his man into line, and then hastily addressed the prisoner: "You will please to give me your company still, Sir; this message from the general affords me an opportunity of safely disposing of you for the present: pray, dispatch."

The two officers soon cleared the centre, and pushed up the hill beyond them.

"Yonder is one you have heard of," resumed Sir Redmond, pointing to a general officer who, still some distance above them, seemed anxiously watching the whole line of battle, surrounded by aides-de-camp, and other attendants. "I know his French feathers," answered Pendergast: "Is your Sarsfield here?"

"Second in command, to-day," replied Sir Redmond, "and managing the right yonder: but, credit me, not to be found close in com-

pany with St. Rothe: they have never agreed well, St. Rothe is so high, or my Lord Lucan so plain-spoken; and last night, especially, 'tis known they quarrelled outright."

"At an unlucky hour for them and you, Sir Redmond, if there be luck in united council."

"It has not yet turned out so," answered Sir Redmond.

"Well; but if the Frenchman should go down?"

"God forbid, Sir! for then, I grant you, we should need a successor in command acquainted with his plan."

This discourse brought them into St. Rothe's presence. After salutations had been interchanged — "I sent for you, Sir Redmond O'Burke," said the commander-in-chief, "to demand if you can tell us whether the English centre has been strongly reinforced since its last repulse?"

Sir Redmond replied that, from all he could learn, it had; but that it was not now stronger, notwithstanding, than it had been at its first advance.

"I know not," he continued, "how many horse now hasten to reinforce it, after turning our left."

“I care not how many, Sir; I spoke but of infantry: *my* reserve of horse can well overmatch *them*;—Call them up!” to an aid-de-camp, who immediately spurred down the hill at St. Rothe’s back: “Here we have double the force, at least, of those you seem to fear, Sir: scarce three thousand, I reckon, come on, after escaping our left—you can see them, Sir, still a good distance beyond the hollow way—scarce three thousand, and I show you six thousand ready to spur after me down that hollow way, cut them to pieces, and then turn upon their infantry, and with the help of our own centre destroy the whole English army.—Here come the deciders of the day!” a great body of cavalry filled up the eminence. “To your post, Sir Redmond O’Burke!—Gallop and follow me!” to the reserve—“and——” St. Rothe stopt speaking. Captain Pendergast, who had been watching the brisk and gallant approach of the English horse, looked up to note why. A shattered and lifeless trunk lay on the ground, at some distance from the prancing steed, which, an instant before, erect, proud, and living, it had bestrode. Pendergast’s experience in the field informed him that it was a random cannon-

shot which had thus ended the boastings of St. Rothe.

The reserve of horse, of which each man had just been about to spur his charger, and shake the bridle round his neck, paused, and looked on in consternation. Many precious moments were thus lost.

“Sarsfield ! Sarsfield, to lead us down !” at length cried a veteran officer, and the well-loved name was repeated by hundreds, although in a tone that bespoke an ominous decrease of spirit.

“Ay, now comes the question you and I debated, Sir Redmond,” said Pendergast.

An aid-de-camp had, however, gone off at headlong speed to summon the new commander-in-chief from the right wing. Meantime, Sir Redmond O’Burke, after delivering his prisoner into proper care, hastened to his own regiment. Pendergast continued observant, his situation enabling him to be so. The chill that had fallen upon the reserve of horse, at the sudden and shocking death of St. Rothe, increased every moment. They recollected the want of concert between the two generals, and their apprehensions of Sarsfield, brave as he was, not knowing

what to do in this emergency, consistently with the arrangements and intents of his haughty superior, were expressed to one another in mutterings loud enough for Pendergast to overhear. The pause itself, at the very moment of excitement, disheartened them. And added to this, there came up to them from the base and middle of the eminence, a swelling tumult, which their doubts readily construed into the worst omen. So that when Sarsfield at last appeared pushing to their position by the aid-de-camp's side, talking eagerly, and showing unusual agitation, the men had lost all the spirit necessary to make their force effective.

“Turned our left, you say ! I heard not of it,” continued Sarsfield, coming nearer : “Where ? who ? Now I see them !—but they have passed the hollow way you spoke of, and cannot now be intercepted. Ay, and by Heaven are in among our centre ! Come, lads, they shall not have it all as they like it ! Down upon them, by *any* way !”

While he spoke, and spoke without making an impression, the infantry of the Irish centre came in groups up the hill, flying in utter defeat. The six thousand horse that should have long ago protected them, waited not another

moment on the field, but abandoned it without a blow. St. Rothe's death had by this time spread through the whole Irish army, and a general retreat took place; the fugitives, at Sarsfield's word, hurrying in confusion towards Limerick. In a short time, Pendergast was alone upon Kircommadon-hill, in the first twilight of a July evening; for, but a short space elapsed, after the last of the Irish had quitted his side, before the van of the English pressed towards him.

And by the hands of his own friends he had at last nearly lost his life, so impetuous was their charge, and so questionable his situation. Recognised and safe, however, he was about to move forward with them, when a faint voice pronounced his name. He turned, and saw Sir Redmond O'Burke a prisoner, guarded by a detached party, and obviously exhausted, and unable to use his limbs. In a moment Pendergast was at his side, took his hand, and eagerly inquired what services he could render him?

"Thanks," said the bleeding prisoner; "I am very weak, and unable to go on; entreat your soldiers that I may rest a moment here, in your keeping."

The request was instantly made and complied with. Pendergast caused the wounded man to be borne aside to a spot not exposed to much observation, and detained some soldiers to guard them against intrusion.

“Thanks, again: this is indeed a favour,” resumed Sir Redmond, as he vainly tried to lay his writhing limbs on the grass, in some position which would not pain them.

“’Tis nothing; I owe you more, much more,” answered Pendergast; “only tell me what that much more, and more after it, shall be—what, Sir Redmond! you change sadly!”

“Water, a drop of water,” murmured the old soldier, in an effort to keep himself from swooning.

“Water there is none near us; but make shift with better liquor:” and Pendergast produced a wine-flask and put it to his lips. The dying man drank eagerly.

“This is loss of blood, not fatigue,” continued Pendergast: “you have been on the English bayonets since we parted, Sir Redmond—you bleed about the body, too.”

“A little, yet enough to let life out: and I do not want it to stay in. Fortune, country,

kith, and kin, all but honour is lost. Worthless life, go you with it."

"Say not so, brave friend,—for friend I call you, friend I hold you, friend you have been to me;" and with a manly tear on his lids, Pendergast clasped Sir Redmond's hand with the clasp that only men can give and take.

"Well; and friend I would be called by you," continued Sir Redmond; "but our friendship will end as quickly as it has begun. Cry not nay, again, Sir," he went on in a changed and broken voice; "there is that at my heart which needs no earthly comfort, holds no earthly hope. But you have wished to do me a good turn, or rather, to do a good turn to one I shall leave after me, for my sake."

"Your lady?" inquired Pendergast, after he had watched some time a convulsion in the frame of his new friend, which wholly took away his power of utterance.

"No! I thank God, no!" cried Sir Redmond, with unexpected energy; and it seemed, in the upturning of his eyes to heaven, and in the rapid motion of his parched lips, that he continued to give praise that the partner of his bosom had already been removed from a life

which, after his death, would have been to her, had she not gone before him, a lot of suffering and bitterness.

“Then, you have children?” continued Pendergast, breaking another pause, and willing to assist the dying officer in the expression of his last wishes.

“I had—four,” answered Sir Redmond: “four, although I am a man scarce yet stricken in years; four sons, and three of them able to follow me to the field, for their country, their king, and their religion, at the breaking out of these unnatural wars. But I have them not now. One fell at Hillsboro’, where we crushed, with young Hamilton at our head, your great Northern Union at a blow, Sir!”—martial spirit and party pride lit up for a moment the speaker’s eye, and strengthened his tone;—“and him I did scarcely sorrow for;—the next, my second, a soldier of nineteen, I saw rolling down with the blood-stained Boyne river; and my third, not eighteen, sank at my feet to-day, a few minutes after I parted from you: the man who put a bayonet into the boy’s heart did so because my poor Felix had struck it aside when it was aimed at his father’s, Sir.”

Here Pendergast had to support Sir Red-

mond's head, as it fell back from weakness. It was on his tongue to assuage the anguish of the parent's recollections, by informing him that he too had lost a son, and an only one, upon the field that day; but a reflection that it was his duty not to interrupt the dying man's train of thought by any concerns of his own, checked the words he was about to utter, and caused him to whisper, instead, "But there yet lives a fourth boy?"

"There does—" answered Sir Redmond, gasping; "my youngest—my darling—the last child of his mother!—and almost a child yet—and friendless—and fortuneless—for all his family are dead, or exiles—or will be—and all his patrimony seized upon—or run through—lavished upon this cause;—and I—" Pendergast now felt a strenuous pressure, which the speaker had not before been able to return for his; then he saw the dread struggle; and after Sir Redmond, writhing round, had said, "Oh, God, be watchful over the child here, as I now crave your mercy for myself!"—Pendergast looked upon a corpse.

Long he looked; and then arising, commanded the soldiers who stood near to accompany him down the hill, and into the bog. His thought was, that he knew where to find the

body of his own son, for he had seen him fall. He was successful. The men bore it, still at his bidding, back to the spot he had left; and there, almost at the top of the hill, he commanded them to make a shallow grave. "They shall lie side by side, even upon this field," he said to himself, "in earnest of the vow I have vowed to the unuttered wish of my former foe,—ay, here shall they lie, forgetful of party rancour, as I shall be forgetful of it to this old man's only living son: for," continued Pendergast, as he walked away, after the little grave had been filled and raised, "the child shall be my child."

CHAPTER II.

CAPTAIN PENDERGAST'S first impulse was to proceed directly to seek his adopted son ; but the claims of military duty were imperious, and for the present he felt compelled to give up his purpose.

Immediately after the battle of Aughram, Ginkle sent detachments to reduce and secure important passes on the Shannon ; and in one of those detachments Pendergast's regiment, and necessarily himself, were included. The English general then summoned him to join the main army before Galway ; and as soon as the town surrendered, Ginkle pursued its garrison to Limerick, whither it had been allowed safe conduct, with the honours of war. Thus Pendergast had not a day's respite to undertake a journey, of which the object gradually interest-

ed him the more, in proportion to the necessity of deferring its accomplishment.

At length, early in October, he witnessed the ratification of the celebrated treaty, by which the crown of three kingdoms was secured to William III. and the pretensions of that monarch's father-in-law for ever abandoned by the Irish people. Captain Pendergast, although a staunch foe to Catholic ascendancy, and in the field to oppose it, was no extravagant party-man; no monopolist, sacrificing the suggestions of justice and fair-play to selfishness or revenge; and he therefore rejoiced, rather than felt disappointed, when he saw that, according to the terms of the treaty, the adherents of James Stuart were recognized as an honourable, brave, and important enemy; conciliated, in proportion to this estimate of their character; invited to place confidence in their new sovereign, and left free to unite with their fellow-subjects of all sects, in making Ireland a nation. "Yes," resolved Pendergast; "let but the spirit of this treaty remain among us for one hundred years, and all that has yet happened will have happened only for the best."

As it seems indispensable that it should be known in the abstract what the treaty of Lime-

rick really was, an account of it is here taken from a book in every one's hands.

“ The Roman Catholics were restored to the enjoyment of such liberty in the exercise of religion as was consistent with the laws of Ireland, and conformable with that which they possessed in the reign of Charles II.

“ All persons whatever were entitled to the protection of these laws, and restored to the possession of their estates, privileges, and immunities, upon their submitting to the present Government, and taking the oath of allegiance to their Majesties King William and Queen Mary, excepting, however, certain persons who were forfeited or exiled.”

“ In order to allay the violence of party, and extinguish private animosities, it was agreed that no person should be sued or impleaded on either side for any trespass, or made accountable for the rents, tenements, lands, or houses he had received or enjoyed since the beginning of the war.

“ Every nobleman and gentleman comprised in these articles was authorized to keep a sword, a case of pistols, and a gun, for his defence or amusement.

“ The inhabitants of Limerick and other gar-

risons were permitted to remove their goods and chattels, without search, visitation, or payment of duty.

“The Lords Justices promised to use their best endeavours that all persons comprehended in this capitulation should for eight months be protected from all arrests and executions for debt or damage. They undertook that their Majesties should ratify these articles within the space of eight months, and use their endeavours that they might be ratified and confirmed in Parliament.”

“All persons were indulged with a free leave to remove with their families and effects to any other country except England and Scotland.

“All officers and soldiers in the service of King James, comprehending even the Rapparees, willing to go beyond sea, were at liberty to march in bodies to the place of embarkation, to be conveyed to the Continent with the French officers and troops. They were furnished with passports, convoys, and carriages, by land and water; and General Ginkle engaged to provide seventy ships, if necessary, for their transportation, with two men-of-war for the accommodation of their officers, and to serve as a convoy to the fleet.

“ That all the garrisons should march out of their respective towns and fortresses with the honours of war.

“ That such as choose to stay behind might dispose of themselves according to their own fancy, after having surrendered their arms to such commissioners as the General should appoint.

“ That all prisoners of war should be set at liberty on both sides.”

“ This is the substance of the famous treaty of Limerick, which the Irish Roman Catholics considered as the great charter of their civil and religious liberties.”—*Smollett, Continuation of Hume*, chapter iii. section 12.

It should be mentioned that, in making this extract, some passages have been omitted which contained merely unimportant matter, or details relating only to the mode proposed for carrying terms into effect; such as the manner in which certain monies were to be paid, &c.

All the passages transcribed will be found to supply information necessary to the comprehension of this story.

If Captain Pendergast felt gratified with the Treaty of Limerick upon public and national grounds, a peculiar private motive much assist-

ed in confirming him in such a frame of mind. He saw that, according to its provisions, Sir Redmond O'Burke's son remained free to possess and enjoy any patrimony that might have descended to him, if indeed any had. This however seemed very questionable, when his father's dying declarations upon the field of Aughram were remembered and considered: and to solve the doubt, as well as to indulge wishes that we have seen him compelled to neglect for some months, Pendergast, very soon after the surrender of Limerick, proceeded in the direction of Sir Redmond's former place of residence.

He performed his journey on horseback, accompanied by a single servant. The man had been a soldier under his command during the recent campaigns, and a close attendant upon his person, at every moment when sterner duties did not otherwise command him to employ himself: nay, his Captain and he had interchanged the offices of master and man, even before the breaking out of the civil war; had marched from home together at the first levy of the Ulster adherents of King William, and from that day to the present hour shared almost every vicissitude of a long and changeful struggle.

It may therefore be concluded that a very friendly understanding subsisted between them. In truth, the old soldier loved his Captain sincerely, though by no means ostentatiously ; and Pendergast esteemed him in return, and treated him as well, sometimes as gently, as John Sharpe's temper and character permitted, or rendered advisable for the due upholding of a superior's authority.

For John had a will of his own, a way of his own, and a view of every thing peculiarly his own ; and then he had also a humour of his own ; a dry, triste vein of what he believed was mirth, and which an ordinary observer might be apt to mistake for the largest portion of his whole character, but which was really but the vehicle for conveying, at least upon most occasions, his bile and bitterness against every person and thing he chose to select for observation. In such times, such an individual could not be expected to carry on his hatreds of any description with a reasonable or even a prudent method ; nor could it be supposed that, towards the great object of hatred continually before his mind, he did not indulge to the very utmost extent of loathing and rancour. In fact, popery had grown up in John Sharpe's thoughts into a kind

of definite, visible monster, of hideous aspect and proportions ; a thing that he and all good people were bound to attack, maim, and kill, at every opportunity,—a real dragon, as it were, such as Guy, Earl of Warwick, had encountered and destroyed. At the same time, there was no rage, no fire, no glow, even, in his manner of feeling or speaking, according to this system, against whatever might be the theme of his hatred. But we shall have it in our power to allow him to express himself and his own difficult character in a better way than either could be described for him.

The travellers, passing in a south-easterly direction through the county of Limerick, left behind them tracts of the richest soil ; then mostly used as sheep-walks, and even now appropriated, in some degree, to the same purposes. Before the day fell on them, they had entered the county of Tipperary, rich, at least, in turf ; and although inferior to the luxuriant soil of Limerick, also holding forth abundant promise to the agriculturist. In 1691, it presented however, along the wretched road pursued by Captain Pendergast and his servant, a black, bleak, and desolate appearance, which was heightened by the marks of devastation,

yet fresh upon it, in the shape of burnt cabins, and dilapidated and deserted mansions, from the fury of Civil war. Its flatness, so far as the travellers had explored it, farther added to this dreary character, and to the impressions which it was calculated to make upon the spirits of the observers. Indeed, Pendergast and his attendant felt the day's journey an uncomfortable one, and their mutual taciturnity proved that they did.

Towards the conclusion of the next day, their road passed the Galteigh mountains; and now, if change of scenery alone could raise their spirits, they must have experienced a relief. But the sense of forlorn seclusion which fell upon them as they traversed the shadows of those barren, lumpy hills, little stamped with picturesque features, and at that time wholly uncultivated, was not in the least degree more cheering than the weariness imparted by the flat, open country. Captain Pendergast cleared up, notwithstanding, and put his horse to a brisk pace, ere they had been quite delivered from the Galteighs; because, according to the previous information he had received, Sir Redmond O'Burke's mansion must now be near at hand. Of a frightened-looking peasant who

crept along the road, and seemed to look round for a hiding-place when the travellers came up, he enquired in what direction it lay. The man answered in pure Irish, and proved unintelligible to both his Northern hearers : his action, however, was more to the purpose ; he pointed up a spacious valley, which ran at right-angles to the road his querists had hitherto pursued ; and thither Captain Pendergast spurred.

“ Well ! the Papishes shame the pigs, oot and oot, in the speech they have,” remarked John Sharpe, as he followed his master into the valley ; and he spoke without unclenching his teeth from a short dingy pipe, which, almost from morning till night, except when he ate his meals, remained tight between them. Captain Pendergast took no notice, but seemed now more than ever thoughtful, if not depressed.

“ Troth, jest !” continued the servant ; “ and yet, yon ’s a bright mon, in his ain mind, I warrant : yes ; thinks he has rhetoric enough for a stage ;” this was one of John’s favourite phrases, of which he had many ; and a standing joke, too, as was evinced by the slow, chuckling, “ Hu, ugh !” that followed it. Still, his master said nothing. “ But your honour has a some-

thing on your heart, I'm thinking," he resumed, coming nearly to his master's side.

"And is that so wonderful, John Sharpe?"

"No, not just so wonderful, your honour; troth, no: and my ain heart is not the lighter for thinking of what I make bold to believe your honour is thinking of along with me."

"What, John?"

"Troth, that it's little better than a woful home we're bound to, yon," pointing in a northern direction;—"that is, not precisely bound to this very moment, for your honour has not told me, yet, where this present wild journey, held through this Southern, papish country, is to end, or, for the matter o' that, why it has ever been begun?" In truth, Captain Pendergast had not cared to give his old servant any hint of his present purpose, although usually in the habit of making him a kind of confidant; and ever since they left Limerick, John Sharpe had been tormented by curiosity, and not a little hurt and offended at his master's want of attention, until a few moments before, when, to his great astonishment, he heard the inquiry after Sir Redmond O'Burke's mansion. Then, his curiosity changed into an excess, for which there is

no descriptive word ; and doubt and misgiving, apprehension and ill-humour, farther took possession of him. He was clever enough, however, from experience of his Captain's character, to suppress all outward show of emotion ; nay, to exhibit his usual vein of sad merriment, and to try for information in the manner we see him adopt in his last remarks.

“ A woful home, indeed,” was Captain Pendergast's only reply.

“ And yet, there is balm in Gilead,” continued John, assuming, what he rarely exhibited, a truly serious tone :—“ Abraham loved Sarah ; but when she died, and that he had mourned and wept for her, and buried her in the field bought of the children of Heth, in the land of Canaan, he married another wife, named Cetura, notwithstanding : and moreover, being already blessed in abundance of children.”

“ He did so, John ; but though yon field of Aughran leaves me childless, as well as wifeless, this day, I incline not to follow the Patriarch's example, in that particular. Never shall the image of a living woman supplant the memory of her who—died to give me my only, only boy.”

“ But also, master,” continued John Sharpe, “ the Lord moved Abraham, seeing it was jest a natural and praiseworthy yearning, to complain in his vision, saying, ‘ What wilt thou give me ? I shall go childless, and the steward of my house is this Eliezer of Damascus,’—and again : ‘ Lo, one born in my house is my heir.’ Genesis, fifteenth chapter, the sacond and the thard varse.”

“ Such cannot be my case, John. No Eliezer of Damascus, no servant of my house can have that good chance. My brother has sons, and sons of my name ; and they are needy, and will want the fortune that now must pass to them—in great part, at the least.”

“ Doubtless, Captain, if so it must be, your honour’s hopeful and worshipful nevoys will have grace to be thankful for whatever share your love and wisdom appoints as their lot ; and moreover, contented that you still keep another share for other uses ; seeing,” continued John, in his own view, “ how many blood-relations, besides their ain selves, will look to enjoy the portion of estate your honour says is not marked out for them.”

“ I have no other blood-relations, however,

John, who stand in need of my help, or who will do well to think of being the better of my testamentary dispositions."

"Troth, just, master; and I was forgetful, not to hold in mind how bountifully Providence has already endowed all other members of your worshipful family;—it will be some auld friend, I warrant, who now little dreams of being so beholden til your honour?—"

"No, John."

It was on the tip of John Sharpe's tongue to insinuate another question, such as "Some faithful old follower, then?" but his prudence closed his lips, and clenched his teeth firmer than ever upon the short shank of his pipe. After a pause, however, he continued.

"Your honour, of a surety, wouldna be for setting up an alms-house, or a lazar-house, for a pack of idle, gossipping, women? a practice out of date, in these times, though much in vogue in the days of auld Papistry."

"Content you, John, I mean not so."

With a suppressed groan, or rather grunt of impatience, the baffled servant inhaled through his set teeth a quick whiff of tobacco-smoke, and with another grunt, a nasal one, let it out

again. John had a head even too much prone, to" (as he himself would say) "put that and that together;" and he could not now avoid most irritating combinations of his master's inquiry after the house of the deceased rebel nobleman, Sir Redmond O'Burke, with those mysterious hints of a co-heir who was not to be related to Captain Pendergast. He still was able, however, to disguise his feelings, and to persevere in making out his case in his own fashion.

After allowing, since the Captain's last answer, sufficient time to elapse, to permit the appearance of the former subject having dropt: "And, troth," he said, "this is but a wild and comfortless road we are travelling, wherever it is to stop:" they had for some time been riding up the spacious valley, which was traversed by a chafing stream, and overhung by lofty hills quite uncultivated; and, beneath their horses' feet, what had once been a wide, though rude track-way, could now scarce be distinguished, owing to encroaching vegetation, from the matted soil at either hand.

"I agree, John; and, either these savage hills make their own twilight, or else evening

begins to fall, to add to our difficulty : mend your pace, however ; we shall soon see the jit of this matter."

They trotted forward at a good rate, and came to a turning in the valley, where, to Captain Pendergast's relief, commenced a stately avenue of sycamores, which must obviously lead to the mansion he sought. The hills at either hand, too, now appeared partially planted, and one, at the left, was completely clothed with wood, which continued along level ground, very nearly to that side of the avenue. It was a scene of deep solitude. No living thing appeared in view save the rooks heavily winging homeward to their nests in the tall trees overhead ; and their hoarse cawing, together with the fret of the stream the travellers had just left behind, the wood-quest's note from the depths of his profound retreat, and the rustling of the October leaves, which came, now and then, shaken by a gust, upon the heads and shoulders of the lonely strangers, were the only sounds that lulled, rather than disturbed, the intense repose of Nature.

Captain Pendergast paused awhile, impressed by the effect of the scene. Then, looking for the avenue gate, he saw that it had been torn

off its rude hinges, and lay in fragments at his horse's feet. Its piers, also, seemed to have been recently ill-treated. He proceeded up the broad avenue, anxiously glancing forward for a sight of the mansion: none appeared. But the avenue soon took a quick turn to the right, and here he once more checked his horse, to contemplate the objects now placed directly before his view.

For about a hundred yards, the avenue swept on. It was terminated by two piers, from which also the gate had been torn. Beyond them, with a considerable space between, were the piers of still another gate, standing more widely apart than their fellows, and of more massive and elaborate construction. From these, to the right and to the left, ran a ruined wall, flanked by trees, and forming three sides of an open square, of which the fourth side was the front of what had once been Sir Redmond O'Burke's mansion; a modern structure, composed of a projecting square mass in the centre, and of uniform adjuncts, which, at right-angles that opposed those of the outer wall, fell backward to make an inner court-yard. The centre was surmounted by a cupola of light and elegant architecture, and was built over an open archway, through which Captain Pendergast still

looked into that inner-court-yard, nay, far beyond it, across pleasure-grounds, terraces and gardens, until the receding and opening valley, which partly formed the distance, was crossed by shadowy hills; and over these, the round red moon just then began to rise, and a mutilated statue, elevated upon a pedestal, in the remote pleasaunce of the mansion, cut blackly and sharply against her disk.

This, then, was the building the traveller had come far to visit; but a second glance informed him that it no longer was in a state to give a welcome to any visitor. We have noticed that its avenue-gates were shattered, and the wall of its outer-court in ruins; now he saw that the walls of the mansion itself were partially blackened with fire, its battlements broken, its windows dashed in, its halls silent, its hearths desolate.

CHAPTER III.

“FRIENDS of ours have been here, John Sharpe,” said Captain Pendergast, after he and his servant had stood some time at the bottom of the avenue, observing the ruin.

“Hu, ugh !” chuckled John, “and I believe you guess at the truth, Captain : it does look just like a place that the true-blues had a night in. I wonder what old Romish grandee yon was in his day : hu, ugh ! troth, just.”

“John, you are a bigot.”

“Well, Captain ; ’tis worthy of a fresh feed til the nose-comforter, howsomever—ugh, ugh !” he continued, slowly and methodically taking out of his pouch, while the reins rested on the neck of his tired and patient steed, a little leathern packet, containing, under many careful foldings, a piece of tobacco, a flint and steel, and touch-paper ; which latter, he said, no man but

himself knew how to make, "and it took the spark only for showing the flint and steel til it, or just letting it hear ae clash atween 'em."

"Though, upon second thought, I hope you may be only fool, John," resumed his master.

"And it's just well to be any thing, these times," still chuckled the old soldier, again glancing up at the ruin, and then sinking his chin on his breast, with a repeated "hu, ugh!" of an increasing joyful character, while he proceeded very systematically to fill his pipe, and "show" the flint and steel to his touch-paper.

"And yet, within yonder walls, I had hoped to find a friend—or one whom I had foredoomed to be a friend," resumed Pendergast, speaking out his own thoughts, rather than now addressing his attendant. John Sharpe heard the words, notwithstanding, and commented upon them, too, with a fresh chuckle of exceeding delight, for which the reader can account by recollecting former allusions to his thoughts and feeling.

"Be silent, Sir, and advance with me to note if any living being yet bides in the ruin," said his master, offended at his freedom, and in a tone which John knew how to value. Both arrived, accordingly, at the gate at the top of the

avenue; but here their proposed investigation seemed stopped; for, a few paces from the piers, they encountered a wide ditch, filled with water, over which, at the point they commanded, a bridge had once been thrown, although at present only some of its fragments lay on either bank.

In this dilemma, Captain Pendergast commanded John Sharpe to join him in shouting loudly towards the desolate building. The deep and prolonged echoes which answered them, as well from the hills and woods around, as from its own walls, were so startling, that master and man paused and listened to their cadences as if they had been attending to an answer shouted back by real voices. Night began to fall rapidly. The extensive and shattered pile grew blacker, as the rising moon rolled her chaste glory over the hills and sky at its back. Her rays came streaming through more than one window-hole of the front, either because another window in the rear, exactly confronting it, allowed free passage to the beam, or that the wall of the rear itself was partially thrown down. The benighted travellers, mutually disliking their present situation, although neither expressed their sensations, shouted again and

again ; and at last, Captain Pendergast thought that a figure darkened the moonshine at one of the windows spoken of, disappearing again in a twinkling, and allowing the beautiful light to stream on. He asked his attendant if he had noticed such an occurrence. John said he had not ; but while they discussed the point, both now were aware that a man certainly stood in the space of another window, which remained in black shadow, and seemed watching them. Perhaps, when he first appeared at the moon-lit window, this person quickly remembered his conspicuous position, and had left it to pursue his observations in a less exposed one. Indeed, the faintest indication of a figure was at present given to our friends ; for its dress seemed as black as the shadow which encompassed it.

Their shouts arose shriller. Still, the echoes alone made answer ; and the figure did not move.

“The stony-hearted Papish !” said John Sharpe ; “what, if we give ae bark til him, Captain ?” showing a pistol.

“On your life, no !” answered his master ; “the man only fears us—we shall prove him a friend.”

“What’s that ?” continued John, chucking

back his head, as something cut with a sharp sound through the air close by his and his Captain's face: "Wooden shoes to my feet, your honour! but if we will not bark til him, the Papish is whistling til us."

"How, John?"

"'Twas a cross-bow arrow, Captain, or say I don't know a brass sixpence from a silver coin of the same name; for though such unchristian weapons be out of vogue in fair campaigning, your honour remembers that woodsmen, gamekeepers, and their like, still practise with them, and Romish woodsmen most of all so—Ha!" a second time the same twitting sound passed the speaker, and he suddenly caught his nose between his fingers and thumb, as if it had been grazed; "I'm touched, now, Captain," he continued, "by one of the like viperish, Papish skin-scratchers: and now, of a surety, your honour will not forbear me from sending over our compliments in return."

"Hold, yet!—the man, yonder has not stirred a finger; I have been watching him as attentively as he seems watching us," cried Pendergast; "but, by Heaven, John! we must turn round here to the left!" a third arrow struck the Captain's saddle and was now quiver-

ing in it—"See! the assassin, or assassins, shelter at the edge of the wood, across the meadow—one has just glanced in among the trees—face round with me, but stand steadily first, and a shot each, before advancing."

These words were little more than said, when the sharp explosion of the travellers' pistols rang through the stilled and shadowed solitude, calling up all its echoes, until the two shots seemed followed by a volley. The next second, rooks cawed in the trees down the avenue, and other birds screamed in the woods; and at the same time Pendergast believed he caught a sudden exclamation from the ruin. Confronting it quickly, he perceived that the dark figure had abandoned the window-space; and while he looked, a stir in the moonshine in the inner-court-yard drew his glance, and he saw a person, clad in long drapery, hurry across the ground at the pedestal of the statue before mentioned.

"Prime and load, and advance now!" cried Captain Pendergast; and he and his valiant man were soon galloping across the open space at their left to the skirt of the great wood. In their career, a fourth arrow struck off John Sharpe's hat, and he and his master imme-

diately answered by again discharging their pistols.

“Stop wit de hand!—shentlemans stop! *graw-gal-boy!* not none but *graw-gal-boy* in wood!” shouted an old man’s voice from another direction. The accents were those of one in great distress and agitation, and vehement supplication.

Captain Pendergast halted, and cried, “Stand!” as he saw the speaker run to cross his way, throwing up his hands, and still shouting uninterruptedly.

“Och, ay, Sirs!” and the old man stood still accordingly, while the travellers closed upon him; Pendergast, now jumping from his saddle, and leaving his horse to John Sharpe’s care—“Och, ay, stands—all—all he bids—but he not hurt boy—good, poor gorçoon—in wood for kill bird—rabbit—nien at all more—*graw-gal-boy!*” and the advocate still spoke and gesticulated in great emotion. Pendergast stood close to him in the moonshine. The old man was quaintly attired. He wore, in part, the very clumsiest, rustic imitation of the civil attire of the day; namely, brogues, hose of a dingy red colour, and breeches, bagged and slashed above the knees; but his long-skirted, collar-

less coat, was of a cut that intimated the character of a servant, or follower of a great family, as also did its broad, crested buttons; and on his white-haired head was a hunting-cap.

“I understand not your speech,” said Captain Pendergast, in reply to the effort of the old Southern peasant to express himself in a language with which he was very little acquainted; “at the least, your meaning is doubtful to me; but if you can comprehend plain English, when spoken, better than you speak it, know that I have been shot at, with arrows, from yon wood-side, while here, waited on by my servant, upon a friendly business.”

“Sure, ay, ould Rory knows; only not shot for kill—arrow shot at rabbit—ay—”

“And how many sportsmen are in the wood?” interrupted Pendergast. “Methinks you spoke of a boy; what men are with him?”

“Och! sure nien man to him—nien! nien! nien left—ochown!”

“Can I see the boy?”

“Anan?” the old man stept back, frightened, and glanced anxiously towards the wood: “Can him see boy, aroon? it’s what him say is that?”

“Yes; and you need fear nothing on his account or your own: I have told you that my visit to this wild place is friendly.”

“Avoch! wild place! ay!—it’s wild place it is, now! wirra-sthrue! ochown!” and he abandoned himself to lamentations, which Pendergast thought might be partly sincere, partly affected to evade answering the direct inquiry. And John Sharpe seemed of the same opinion; for having come up, leading his master’s horse, he said suddenly—

“Fule of a Papish! reply to his honour’s question.”

“Silence, Sharpe,” cried Captain Pendergast angrily, as the old man looked still more frightened, “and offer no other word on this matter. My servant is wayward,” he continued in a mild voice to old Rory; “but I once more assure you, on the faith of a gentleman, that we are here as friends.”

“Friends! avoch! nien friends come now—nien alive to come—sure, no—ochown! and sure nien ever at all, to dress in cap and feather, like him honour.”

“Nay, old man, this grows tedious; I am tired with my long journey hither, and not in

the humour for cross-purposes, especially when assured of my own intentions ; so, we will cut the discourse short. If the boy you speak of be, as I suspect and hope he is, the youngest and only living son of your old master, Sir Red——.”

“Och, nien, nien !” interrupted the old servant, gaining the height of his terror ; “never at all ! What him do here to ould Rory ? sure, nien ; graw-gal-boy, Rory’s own sisther’s son, here for having shoot in wood—hi-ho ! i-hoo !” he continued, facing round to the trees, as he shouted shrilly, and clapped his hands—“be going home, Murtach, ma-chree, to mother, over hill : it’s the dark, a-vich, and nien more arrows till the morrow at morning !”

“If Sir Redmond O’Burke’s son listens to me,” resumed Pendergast, also speaking loudly, “I advise, I intreat him, not to withdraw, but rather advance to my side : I bear a message from his father.”

Old Rory uttered a cry of fearful astonishment at these words, and again clapped his hands. Another exclamation reached Pendergast from the wood’s edge. He turned his head quickly in the direction whence it came. The topmost boughs of one of the trees that skirted

the wood were in motion, and presently a boy was seen clambering down, from branch to branch, with great agility and earnestness: not waiting to slide along the trunk, he swung himself by the hands out of a branch some yards above the ground, alighted firmly on his feet, and quickly crossed the meadow in a direct line towards the travellers. He seemed about twelve; tall for his years, and slight, but of elegant proportion; and his erect air, his step, and the grace, if not graceful motion of his limbs, belied, to Pendergast's mind, old Rory's pretensions to a relationship with the young stranger.

As he came close, Pendergast noticed his attire with sorrow, because it bespoke his destitute situation. The boy wore a tight-fitting, long-backed, wide-skirted coat, of a velvet texture, and it had once been highly embroidered; but the gold filigree-work was now tarnished, and in part worn or rent off, and the garment itself burst in many places. He was bare-headed; his light hair flowing in curls over his shoulders. The deep linen collar which folded down under his chin, seemed in a soiled state. His thighs and legs were covered with cloth and hose of as coarse materials as those worn

by old Rory ; and like him, too, he trod in common Irish brogues. And yet, wretched as were the circumstances indicated by this ill-sorted union of the costume of better days, with that of present poverty, the boy showed in his whole expression nothing of a self-abasing consciousness of misfortune. On the contrary, as has been said in other words, his mien and step were high and proud ; and when he stopped suddenly, and confronted Captain Pendergast, the glowing eagerness of his eyes, and the out-turning of his full, almost heavy lips, told that his poor appearance was quite forgotten, partly in a good opinion of himself, partly in the subject that engrossed and agitated his mind. A cross-bow and a quiver were slung at his back.

“ The spawn of the scarlet b—— ! ” muttered John Sharpe ; “ he dares come into our presence with the very weapons dangling ahint him.”

And John, sucking his pipe ever more spitefully for each renewed glance, scowled at the young archer ; and old Rory increased his outcries of fear and lamentation at every step that brought him nearer. But, unheeding either, the boy looked straightly and firmly into Cap-

tain Pendergast's eyes, as he said, the moment he stopped short, "I am Sir Redmond O'Burke's only living son—who are you that speak of a message from my father?"

"His friend; Pendergast, of Pendergast-Hall, young Sir."

"His friend? my father had no friend of that name, or wearing that livery," he added, peering closely at the Captain's military attire.

"He had not, I grant you, to your knowledge, or before he left home for the wars; and yet I was his *last* friend."

"How!—would you tell me that my father changed sides, Sir? would you dare tell me that?" asked young O'Burke, very indignantly.

"No: he was as true a gentleman as ever proved loyal, through thick and thin, to an indifferent cause."

"Indifferent cause, Sir? but I pause not now on your word," he continued, eagerly, while tears gathered in his eyes—"what message do you bear from my father?"

"That you ride with me, from this place, and take up your abode in my house."

"Ah!" cried the boy, jumping back; "a trick to make me a prisoner!"

"Young gentleman," expostulated Pender-

gast, "be not so self-opinioned: these wars are over; peace reigns in the land, with some honour to your father's cause; and I could not, dare not make you a prisoner, if I would."

"And that is true?" young O'Burke advanced again: "But am I to meet my father in your house, Sir?" he asked, in a voice not confident with hope or expectation.

"No, my boy," answered Pendergast, solemnly.

"And why not? where is he? Oh! we have heard some rumours here; part from friends, part from enemies; but all so loose, that we could not, would not credit them! Yet now, Sir, you, I fear, bring us the tidings, indeed! I call to mind your words—You were my father's *last* friend, you said? Where arose your friendship?"

"At Aughram."

"And there he engaged you to bear me this message?"

"There; and it was his *last message*, too."

The boy, shrieking like a woman, suddenly dropped, sitting on the grass, covered his face with his hand, and while he rocked to and fro, continued to utter the shrill laments that, at his years, express the orphan's grief for the loss of

a beloved parent, mixed up with a cutting sense of helplessness and destitution. Old Rory knelt at his side, held him in his arms, and instead of trying to soothe his anguish, added to it by his own wild and almost fearful cries. Captain Pendergast, regarding the pair in silence, felt his own tears flow. "Here," he thought, "here, in the depths of the domains of his fathers, and within sight of their ruined house, and only supported by that last faithful old follower,—here, in the light of the moon, houseless and ragged, it is indeed sad news for the boy to hear, and a sad scene for me to witness.—Alight, John Sharpe, and assist me in comforting this lad and old man."

Without a word, John descended from his saddle; and, notwithstanding all his habitual crabbedness of feeling, his master heard him snuffle, in evidence that even his eyes were infected.

"Rory," pursued Pendergast, "let us all stand on our feet, and look about for some place of shelter for the night; I am hungry and thirsty, and wish you to purchase me food and drink." Rory felt a heavy purse thrust into his hand; he looked up, stupidly; ceased weeping, and arose. "Prevail on my young friend

to take my arm ;—my hand, first, Rory,” continued the speaker, “ be assured I am anxious he should love me. His father saved my life twice in one day ; I could not preserve his, afterwards, at the turn of the battle ; but, Sir Redmond O’Burke bequeathed him to me, and I have sworn he shall be a son to me ; and the oath was made, Rory, above the grave in which my own hands assisted to stretch, side by side, this young boy’s father, and my own only son.” These words, as had been intended, found their way to young O’Burke’s ear, and also produced the desired effect. He uncovered his face, looked up at Pendergast, and saw his tears in the moonlight ; and then he jumped to his arms, and gave him embrace for embrace.

CHAPTER IV.

“ I HAVE no roof to offer you, Sir,” said young O’Burke, soon afterwards, “ but Rory Laherty’s den in the heart of the forest ; and that is not as good a one as even he has been used to : we made it, with our four hands, since his house was burnt down.”

Expressing himself contented with any accommodation, Pendergast requested his young friend to show the way through the wood. John Sharpe, his gentler feelings passed and gone, and now holding a gruff, quaint silence, followed with old Rory, who, still agitated and afflicted, kept up an incessant account, in broken English, of the recent sufferings of his master’s family ; no one word of which, (when understood,) excited aught save the contempt of the hearer ; except, perhaps, that now and then his “ ugh, hee !” hinted a gratification to his me-

chanical hatreds and aversions, arising out of some peculiar instance of the severities acted towards the retainers of Sir Redmond's house, by the detachment of King William's army which had been dispatched to attack and destroy it.

While Pendergast, leaning on the boy, approached the wood, he heard John Sharpe exclaim suddenly, "Captain, look close! 'ware ambuscade!"

His master, glancing forward, certainly saw some person glide from the skirt of the wood into its dark intricacies, and disappear. It was, he believed, the same individual, at least one wearing the same singular dark drapery, whom he had before observed in the window-space of the ruined mansion. He stopped, and asked the boy, "Who was that?"

Young O'Burke said he had seen no one.

"My young Sir—but no, tell me your christian name before I speak farther."

"Patrick," answered the boy frankly, though a little surprised at his companion's remarkable manner.

"Well, then, Patrick, tell me—were you alone in the wood a while ago?"

"All alone, Sir," still frankly.

“ And sent the four arrows across the meadow with your own hand ?”

“ With my own hand, Sir ; and *could* have sent ten after them, mayhap with better aim, for I ever grow better at the cross-bow after a waste shot or two ; ay, Sir, and *would*, but for Rory ; for I had no thought to wait to be dragged, like a dog, from my hiding-place, and tied neck and heels on a garron, and led off to be murdered by men come, as I then believed, to have the life of the last O’Burke.”

“ Very proper, and I do not quarrel with your cross-bow play, though I had well nigh had the odds against me in it. But resolve me another question. What people can be now in the wood, to your knowledge ?”

“ None, Sir. I am sure there is never a man, gentle or simple, dares show his head within miles of my father’s house, barring Rory Laherty and myself ; or, supposing there were, I or he should know of them ; and, in truth, we know of none.”

“ And yet I saw a man move into the wood before us, and one, I reckon, whom I have seen an hour ago, in another place.”

“ If so it be, Sir, he is but some poor run-

away from his own burnt home to ours here. Doubt nothing in any case; all such must be friends of an O'Burke, and of an O'Burke's friend."

"You know Rory to be thoroughly honest?" pursued Pendergast.

"Is it Rory, Sir? Rory! my own poor old foster-father! reared up in my family since he was a child! Come, Sir—and my only friend, since—oh, come, Sir! By the soul of my father!"—the boy again burst into vehement tears—"Rory and I will fight against any foe of yours, and not abet them."

"I believe it, Patrick;" Pendergast pressed his arm—"so, show us your wood-nest."

In a few moments all were winding, or rather scrambling, their way through the forest; for as yet no path was visible, and the brushwood proved thick and matted, and the trunks of the trees very close together; so close, indeed, that although the October winds had begun to thin the foliage of their branches, not a ray of moonshine could penetrate to the adventurers through the massive screen overhead.

In some time, however, Pendergast caught through the trees, at a distance, the broken

beams of the moon, and the party soon escaped from the woody depths upon a patch of comparatively open ground, where the grass was short and fresh, and dotted with quivering light and shade. In its centre appeared a small pile of stones, loosely huddled together, and surmounted by a few more, shaped into the rude semblance of a cross : near at hand was a little bubbling spring. John Sharpe started at the sight of the primitive altar ; and, to Captain Pendergast's surprise, so did Patrick O'Burke and his old fosterfather. Then they addressed each other in Irish, and their tones seemed those of surprise and inquiry.

"Have you not passed this way before?" asked Pendergast. The boy said, "Yes, every day."

"But not seen the stones till now?"

"No," his young friend replied, though they could not have escaped his notice had they previously been there ; in fact, they must have been piled up within the last few hours, and hence his and old Rory's surprise.

"And piled up by the man I have twice observed near us," continued Pendergast : "but lead on."

“We are at home,” said Patrick.

“A leaky roof, truly,” observed the Captain, glancing up at the blue sky.

“You shall see, Sir.”

There had been a natural pit, or hollow, almost in the middle of the spread of open ground: a gradual descent between steep and almost perpendicular banks. Over this, Rory and his foster-son had laid strong branches, and thin boughs, and lastly sods, until the hollow quite disappeared, and the whole seemed an equal surface. A few holes, invisible to any unsuspicious eye, were left, however, to let air and light in, and smoke out; and at the point where the descent began, the architects had preserved an orifice some feet wide, which, every time they entered or abandoned the retreat, was carefully hidden with fresh-pulled boughs, so disposed as to appear growing out of the earth. Neither seemed to have contemplated that, although their hiding-place might not stand much chance of being descried, it might, nevertheless, be very suddenly invaded by any wanderer who, as much to his own peril as to theirs, should happen to take for granted what they prided themselves upon making so plausible—namely, that the frail roof of the den was firm

ground. But no matter for this deficiency of their plan: such was the abode into which the last son of Sir Redmond O'Burke invited his new protector to descend.

When the bushes were removed, a rude ladder appeared at the mouth of the orifice which they had concealed. All was pitchy dark below. Rory, after a few words in Irish, precipitated himself first into the rayless abyss, and the rest of the party awaited his preliminary arrangements to make them welcome. Presently the void became illuminated by an intermittent flame, and he was heard puffing at his fire. Pendergast and the abhorring and still suspicious John Sharpe, then descended the ladder; Patrick O'Burke stopped half-way down to pull the boughs over the orifice.

"Let it not trouble you, Patrick, except your thought be to stuff the wind out," said Pendergast: "the day has passed when you needed to fear detection, you or any friend of yours; and, truly, our only need for hiding ourselves in this pit to-night, depends on the supposition that there is no better resting-place at hand."

"Nor is there, Sir," answered Patrick; "no cabin on my father's lands was left standing."

“Ugh, ugh!” commented John Sharpe. His master sufficiently corrected him with a look, and ordered him to assist Rory in some cooking process which the old man was undertaking at his turfen fire; then continued:—“Well, Patrick, ’twas a pity; yet no more than others would have done on my lands in Far North, if it had come to their turn: so, never heed the hole, for the present; it will help to rid us of the smoke of our fire, which, after all, looks comfortable. Your hand, while you turn in the ladder.”

“Queen of heaven!” cried Patrick, grasping tightly the sides of the ladder, as with his back to Pendergast, he looked up to the black orifice. His friend also looked up thither, and saw a pale, wan, strongly-marked face gazing through the opening. The Captain’s first impulse was to draw a pistol, while old Rory clapped his hands, and ejaculated, as usual, and John Sharpe seconded his master; but a steady observation of the face told that it could not be an enemy’s. Want and misery solely seemed to give it its startling expression; and its sunken eyes glared only with fear at the strangers, and with hunger at the viands now cooking on Rory’s fire.

“Hold my legs tight, or I shall fall, Sir,” continued Patrick.

“What, boy ! afraid of such a poor hungry man as that ?” said Pendergast.

“It is no man, but the ghost of Father James, my father’s chaplain ; he was slain in his flight from our house.”

“A papish priest’s ghost !” muttered John Sharpe ; “hu, ugh ; and as it must needs be like to himself, notwithstanding it is so muckle the less harmful, I was curious to see, for the first time in my life, the——”

“Keep silence, I warn you, Sir,” interrupted Pendergast ; “this is no ghost, Patrick, but your old friend himself, or rather, I suppose, a moiety of him, come to prefer a claim on our hospitality, with a good appetite.”

“Food, food, in charity’s name !” said the new-comer, in weak accents. In a few minutes, Pendergast had helped the starving man down the ladder, placed him sitting on dry rushes and moss, near the fire, and, assisted by Patrick, gave him to eat of the first slice of a haunch of venison, now partially cooked, according to Rory Laherty’s best method. And in the person of Father James, Pendergast was assured he saw the individual who had appear-

ed, watching him and Sharpe from the ruin, and afterwards on the edge of the wood. He remarked the wanderer's dark-brown ecclesiastical undress, and remembered the ample drapery of the suspicious figure.

While Father James ate, and afterwards drank, his eyes fixed with a stupified recognition upon young O'Burke. The boy, experiencing much pity and reverence, and perhaps still under the influence of his recent terror, regarded him with a stare almost as vacant. Presently, the priest's eyes grew heavy, the lids often falling and opening again; then he mechanically changed his look to the fire; feebly stretched out his hands to the blaze, rubbed them, looked again at Patrick, and smiled; and then his head nodded to his breast, and with the weak smile on his lips, he fell asleep. Rory and Pendergast laid him down gently, and at his ease, upon the soft couch of rushes and moss, the old campaigner covering his limbs with his riding-cloak; a merciful act, which drew from John Sharpe one of his most expressive nasal grunts; and "let him sleep his fill," said Pendergast, "he will wake up a new man: meantime, Rory, we can judge of your cookery."

With an almost savage energy of action, for which every thing he did was remarkable, the old gamekeeper proceeded to dispose his viands in eating form. The venison was supported by hares, rabbits, and wood-pigeons, all roasted, and not very free of turf-ashes, nor equally browned on their surfaces ; and Rory, once more changing his character into that of waiting-man, laid his fare upon flat stones, previously made hot, and ostentatiously placed a single knife, a hunting one, beside the venison. He had previously put a bottle of French wine in Father James's hands ; now he produced half a dozen more, of different kinds, adding, at the bottom of the board, where John Sharpe and he were to sit, a little gallon barrel of brandy. Pendergast expressed his surprise at the presence of these last good accompaniments to a substantial dinner ; and young Patrick informed him that they had been stealthily brought to the den by Rory, who, in his troubled and objectless visits to the adjacent ruin, since the military abandoned it, fortunately discovered a wine-cellar, into which the visitors had failed to penetrate.

While the two new friends spoke apart, Rory was watching his young master's eye.

Their glances met, and Rory made an expressive sign.

“Why, yes, foster-father,” said the boy, smiling sadly, “make your very heart glad, and bring it out at once; the only fragment of finery he has been able to snatch at in the day of waste, Sir,” he continued, addressing his guest.

Rory ran to the side of the den, and began displacing some huge stones piled up against it. John Sharpe laid down the leg of a hare which he had been tearing with his teeth, and watched his rapid motions with some suspicion. Presently appeared a hole, which the old man’s exertions had cleared, and into this he thrust his arm at full length, and drew forth, what seemed a bundle of twisted hay; but finally he produced from the careful envelope a massive silver cup, supported by three legs, highly embossed, and showing the crest of the O’Burkes. It was quickly placed on the ground at his young master’s right-hand, and supper went on.

Patrick O’Burke, though but a boy, courteously attended to his guest. Rory Laherty “made much” of John Sharpe, who, wrought upon, chiefly by the good food and liquor, and, at length, a little by the old man’s eager hos-

pitality, condescended to relax the austere rigidity of his features, and to subside into the kind of contemptuous ironical mirth which he sometimes exhibited. While Rory continued to overheap the flat stone before him, or refilled his horn—"Thanks til ye, mon," John would grumble, slowly smacking his lips, as he stared straightforward to his master, just smiling in a sort that seemed to say, "How stricken by our presence the Papishes be, poor bodies! but the fare's no' so bad neither: so, come." Had he known Rory better, he would not have felt so flattered by his civilities. The old fellow was every whit as shrewd as he, and, strange to assert, thought John Sharpe as great a block-head as John Sharpe thought Rory Laherty: nay, they hated and despised each other with equal force on both sides, although each made the egotistical mistake of imagining that it was impossible his companion could respond his sentiments; or, it should rather be said, such an idea never entered into the head of either. Their mutual oversight, as well as their mutual rancour, sprang from their ignorance. Had Rory thought less uncharitably, and more justly, of the heresy of Protestantism; and had John Sharpe known an iota of Rory's creed,

they would have proved better friends : and again, had they previously observed the different manners in which subdued, though strongly-felt sentiments were indicated in their different communities—that is, had John had opportunities of studying the Roman Catholic people of the South, and Rory the Protestant people of the North, (than whom scarce any two of the nations of the earth can differ more widely,) John's sententiousness and sober gruffness would not have seemed stupidity to his entertainer, nor Rory's garrulity and vivacious energy, something of the same kind to the entertained person ; at the same time, that neither manner could have long hidden the mental reserves which both were now so successful in disguising. Such are the mistakes occasioned by not knowing the world.

But, apart from the mere habitual shrewdness of Rory in veiling his dislike and contempt under a guise of vehement politeness, that might well pass for folly, he had at present a particular motive for so doing. He hoped that his young master was to be served by the newcomers ; and he would as soon have put his arm to roast for them, in the turfen fire, as by word or look convey any offence that might mar the

fortunes of the last son of Sir Redmond O'Burke. In perfect candour, he was farther helped on in his amiable duplicity—(there is such a thing, even if Rory does not deserve having it said of him,)—by a lurking fear that the friendship proffered by the strangers was hollow, and assumed only for the purpose of entrapping and destroying his foster-son and himself.

After the meal had proceeded some time, Patrick O'Burke, raising the massive cup to his lips, which now brimmed with wine, said, in a low tone that would not disturb the sleeping priest—"Mr. Pendergast, it does not beseem my years to drink bumpers of claret, and I, therefore, stand excused if I but put my lips to this cup: but, my lips I *will* put to it, to toast your health, Sir, and welcome to O'Burke's country."

"Thanks, my boy; and I will take it now, to drink to our future love and good fellowship in Far North."

"I join you, in the heart, Sir; and yet it will be a black day, the day I leave the place I was born in, and know so well, for one that holds none of my kindred, and that I have never seen: the fields, and hills, and streams, and

glins, Rory," turning to his foster-father, while his eyes moistened, "every stick and stone of which you and I could tell—ay, to the very yellow pebbles on the bottom of the clear brook in the summer,—and I to go, alone, Rory, to make acquaintance with new hills, and glins, and streams."

"Rory shall come with us, if you like," interrupted Pendergast. The proposition dried the tears of Patrick and the old man, and the latter, jumping up with a joyful cry, ran to embrace his young master; and then he knelt and kissed, not in a mere formal way, but twenty times over, Captain Pendergast's hand.

"The blubbering Papish," grumbled Sharpe: "and what does your honour preceesely intend that Mr. Rory should do, in the bonny North?" he continued, addressing his master.

"Just any thing he is most fit and able to do for his bread, John."

"Troth, jest," pursued John: "and, doubtless, that will consist in service upon the body of his young master, there."

"Ay—nien, Rory says," interrupted the object of Sharpe's questions;—"him larn, Sir Patrick," bowing to his foster-son—"him larn, Sir

Patrick, shoot more rabbit—more bird—sure, ay—always more—but never nien sarvice else, Rory know—can make nien, indeed, ochown.”

“He speaks true, Sir,” said Patrick; “old Rory would prove but a clumsy body-man, and, moreover, the want of liberty, the want of sun and air, ay, and shower and storm, and a country-side to roam over, would soon kill the old man, I fear,” he added in a whisper.

“Then, let Rory be our gamekeeper, John,” resumed Pendergast, smiling with an expressive meaning at his man; “it seems the office he best can fill at Pendergast Hall.”

Patrick and Rory were again delighted; but John Sharpe answered only in a dry way, although he felt anguish within him: “It’s like, so; nevertheless, your honour used to think that one John Sharpe could fill the place too; troth, jest.”

“But, surely, can fill others as well, to a tittle, John; and as M’Nevin is dead, I had a thought of making my late gamekeeper my future land-steward.”

“See there til it!” resumed the new officer, his eyes opening widely upon his master, in mixed surprise and pleasure; “thanks til your

honour," he continued, when a selfish abstraction gave him time, and even yet the words had little energy in them; "and maybe, I can't, as your honour says;" now he grew, according to him, pleasant; "maybe, I can't fill auld Sam M'Nevin's shoes; no harm in trying, howsoever; hugh, ugh!"

"Well, John; report what hour it is."

"Come out, Tell-truth," chuckled John, becoming still more mirthful, as, slowly and cautiously, he drew from his poke the article he so encomiastically addressed. At first appeared, suspended to a steel chain of massive proportions, something in a brown leather case; which case, smiling all the time, he slid off; then the eye rested on another leather case, of different texture from the first; and finally, he exposed to view a watch, of the diameter of, and almost as round as a twenty-four pound shot, of which the back was encrusted with some green composition; and that back, as well as the glass of the huge time-piece, underwent furbishing from the loose cuff of his jacket, ere John continued, smiling affectionately at the hands of the dial, "Precesely half of the hour, and the saxth minute after eleven of the clock at night, by ane watch that's as true as the sun; troth, jest!"

by which account," proceeding to envelope his infallible oracle again; "as I reckon, his Papish reverence, yon, has enjoyed indifferent sound sleep these three hours last passed;—though, bless my gracious eyes! he sleeps no longer, nevertheless!" added John, staring at the priest, and starting in some alarm, as he found the eyes of the supposed sleeper fixed on his.

"No, friend, I do not sleep; and if I have slept, it was against my will and my purpose," answered Father James, rapidly, and in a husky voice; "and to the unintended lapse I owe, doubtless, the ill chance of falling into merciless hands," he continued, his eyes expressing a wild and incoherent agitation; "but since it is so, welcome the fate that, often narrowly 'scaped, gives me rest at last; and I but pray——"

"Father James!" interrupted young O'Burke, who had stepped softly to his back, and, as he spoke, he caught his old friend by the arm. Without looking behind, or, as it seemed, recollecting the sound of a well-known voice, the ecclesiastic shrieked hoarsely, flung himself on his face, and in broken, but still rapid sentences, went on—"That you shoot me, or sabre me, on the open plat, in the wood—my sole prayer! that ye drag me up—fling me at the foot of the

cross of stones—I raised the sign of hope, there, with my own hands, since the night-fall—we were all so much in need of a chapel for worship—and then I went to seek some that would be glad to meet me in it—an old man and a young boy——”

“They are at your side ; see,” resumed Patrick ; “feel my hand, Father James—hear my voice, your old pupil’s voice——”

Again crying out, feebly though wildly, the priest knelt up, caught Patrick in his arms, and continued, “You in the toils, too ! and for me ! doubtless, for me ! you sought to save your poor tutor, Patrick, and now you share his lot ! May God forgive me !—But oh, I do not deserve forgiveness for this ! I should not have wandered here to peril you ! The rocks and the caves were my fitter abode—and there, Patrick, there I could have baffled them for ever and a day, good boy ! Ay, ever since the flight, on the first morning, my limbs got the strength and fleetness of your own stag-hounds ! when they showed themselves at a distance, among the clouds of the hills, I have ventured leaps, Patrick, from rock to rock, that would put your feats to shame !” he now whispered less distinctly than before, and the vague smiles

which accompanied his words bespoke his shattered state of mind.

Seclusion, indeed, severe study, and a total ignorance of the world, had, previous to the recent shock it received, divested that mind of the power of resisting a great and unexpected calamity. Pendergast, from a conversation with Patrick, as well as from his own remarks, saw how the case stood, and applied himself to console the sufferer. At first he allowed the boy to try his unassisted efforts; and, after some time, Father James seemed disposed to believe that his pupil and himself were not encompassed by enemies, or placed in immediate or deadly peril. But it was a much harder task to give him a single clear perception of the fact that, according to the Treaty of Limerick, so lately signed, his religion, and he, as a minister of that religion, were safe from future hostility, and entitled to a recognition and a place in the land. The priest smiled again at such assertions, and it was evident that his wavering recollection of what he had gone through, merely because he was a Catholic priest, now made him incredulous, at once, and incapable, by re-exciting his mind, of deliberative reasoning upon this topic. Captain Pendergast seconded Patrick, in vain,

giving himself as authority for the good tidings both sought to impress. The clergyman told Patrick he was imposed upon, and Pendergast that he wished to create a delusion for some terrible purpose.

At length Patrick adduced, as strong though indirect proof of the truth, the proposal of Captain Pendergast, a Protestant gentleman, and an officer bearing King William's commission, to convey him, Patrick, and his old foster-father, openly to his residence in the North, and there give them countenance and protection: and with fresh tears the boy related the events which had prompted Pendergast to offer such an arrangement. And now the listener's reason seemed finally to be appealed to through his feelings. At the mention of Sir Redmond O'Burke's death, and of the last words between him and his foe-friend, tutor and pupil mingled their tears; and, after yielding to a long fit of grief, the clergyman looked into Pendergast's face more expressively than he had before done, and returned the friendly pressure which King William's officer meant for his reassurance.

For some minutes ensuing, his lips moved as if in prayer; then he glanced around from one

to another of the persons who surrounded him, and up to the opening into the retreat, as if his mind was beginning to get back the power of making distinct observations, and comprehending the present by the past. Suddenly he started, and again growing terrified and doubtful, asked who they were who had fired shots at him when he stood in a window of the castle—"some hours before—or days—or yesterday—in the evening—or at the dawn, he was not assured which?"

Pendergast, frankly admitting that he and his attendant fired the shots alluded to, proceeded to explain that no pistol had been pointed at him. The spirit-broken and feeble-minded man shook his head, and was silent. Patrick and Rory, while John Sharpe did not vouchsafe a word, upheld Pendergast's story to be true; still he would not, or again shaken in his reasoning capabilities, could not be convinced.

"Sham friends," he muttered—"heretic friends: God pity us, God guide us;—and you are going with them, Patrick? With *them*, and to the black North? where there is neither priest nor prayers of your own? ah!" This new view of the subject seemed wholly to divert

him from every other, and while he continued to rave upon it, seemed fast reducing him to utter imbecility of mind. Pendergast hastened to break up and rout the thick-coming delusions, somewhat impatient, at length, of the poor priest's unreasonable pertinacity, though still he pitied him, and, as his words will show, wished to comfort him.

“Father James, since so my adopted boy calls you, listen to a few plain words from a plain man. Patrick O’Burke is meant fair, ay, fair, in every particular; and in that of his religious opinions, as well as in every other. It has never entered into my head to assail even what I must consider the prejudices of his education.”

“Impure errors, superstitions, idolatries, crying blasphemies; troth, jest,” emendated Sharpe.

“Be silent, John, or I will break your pate,” said his master; “or more, you get no land-stewardship at my hands. I am followed by a bigot fool, Sir,” re-addressing the priest; “only he ever says more harm and offence than he has brains, or even heart, bad as he is, to mean or feel: heed him not, but still give me your

attention. This boy shall live in his father's faith, so far as I can help it; I swear it to him and to you by the word and honour of a gentleman, a soldier, and a christian; I swear it by his father's memory, and by the love and awe I bear that memory. And he shall hear his own prayers too, and say them with his own priest, if you are willing. Come with him to the North. You have been his tutor also, and he will still need your instructions; and even on this account, I say to you, come with him."

This speech, as the speaker hoped it would have done, arrested and fixed the vague ideas of the person to whom it was addressed. After some farther conversation, he acknowledged himself convinced, and gratefully willing to accompany his beloved Patrick wherever their new patron should command. With a little entreaty, he was prevailed upon to assist in consuming the portion of supper which his unexpected awaking, and its results, had left to cool; and with an intellect considerably re-arranged, though still disposed to shake to pieces at the slightest start, he laid himself down to take a fresh sleep. All followed his example in good heart, except John Sharpe, who, as he plucked

his short pipe from his tenacious and reluctant teeth, to prepare himself for slumber, uttered a groan, which, to his master's ear, protested against all the proceedings of the night, and, as it were, cried shame upon them, and appealed against them to a higher tribunal

CHAPTER V.

A CHEERY October sun came streaming down through the open orifice, and the minor cran- nies of the half-subterranean abode, to awaken the sleepers, and bid them be up and doing. Old Rory awoke first, and set about preparing a morning meal ; his motions being less vehement than usual, out of deference to his guests, whom he would fain allow to slumber on, until they should waken of their own accord.

But the watchful habits of Captain Pendergast and his man soon broke up their sleep also ; and while the priest and the boy yet slept profoundly, John Sharpe was commanded by his master to ascend the ladder, emerge into day, and look after their horses, whom John had tied to two trees the previous night.

“ And move softly, John, so as not to startle our friends here,” whispered Pendergast ; “ and

if you have need to speak, let it be under your breath."

The old dragoon slowly crept up the ladder, and when his eyes came upon a level with the opening, and that he could see out over the patch of cleared ground abroad, his captain observed him stop short, and heard him mutter in great indignation.

"What's to do now, John Sharpe?" still whispering.

"More papishes," answered John; "and caught openly at their works of idolatry, troth jest; but I'se be one among 'em."

"Come down, Sir," ordered his master, as he began to quicken his strides up the ladder, "and let me understand all this; else, in breach of what may now be called the land's law, you do something to endanger as well as disgrace yourself, and me whom you serve."

Grumbling sorely, John descended accordingly, and sat apart in about the middle of the den, folding his arms hard, and sucking his short pipe disapprovingly.

Pendergast gained the step of the ladder upon which he had recently stood, and looking abroad as he had done, saw a very young and handsome man, in French military attire, kneeling

upon one knee beside Father James's cross of stones, and holding in his hand his broad-brimmed peaked hat, from which streamed a profuse plume of white feathers, as his lips moved seemingly in prayer. The colour of health was high on his cheeks, and his blue eyes, although somewhat controlled by the present occupation of his mind, sparkled spiritedly, perhaps rather recklessly. His own brown hair, ample as the absurd perriwig of the day, and disposed like one, fell adown his back ; and his dress was in the extreme of even French finery. Point-lace fringed his loosely-tied neck-cloth ; he wore a highly-polished breast-piece, with pauldrons, over a white satin waistcoat, of which the lower edges, and those of its great pocket-flaps, were edged with silver ; across the breast-piece came a red-ribbon ; his coat left open, and almost falling off, so liberal were its dimensions, and so wide its sleeves, was of light-blue velvet, and also embroidered ; very little of a tight-fitting small-clothes could be seen, his waistcoat hung so low, and his boots, after passing the knees, came up so high, gaping widely round the thigh, although they clung closely and foppishly to the leg ; and even his gloves were fine things, set off with fanciful

needle-work, and deep fringe. Behind him stood two attendants, holding three horses, and wearing military uniform too, though of a more modest kind than that of their master; but they were unarmed, while he had pistols in his belt, and a gay sword at his side.

Captain Pendergast was struck with the pleasure-giving face and air of the young officer—one, as he could determine at a glance, lately in the field for King James, and wearing attire supplied to that unhappy monarch, for his Irish generals and captains, by his loving cousin, Louis of France. Looking closer at the youthful devotee, he perceived that the star of nobility glittered on the left breast of his open coat; and “Ay,” concluded Pendergast; “one of the *to-be* peerages made by old Shamus, like his Sarsfield’s Lucan Lordship; and now about as much value as his brass sixpences: let the lad have the benefit of it, however, so far as he can, for me; as well as of his stock-and-stone piety, here; I’ll not disturb him till his devotions be over, such as they are.”

So saying, the unseen observer began to descend the ladder. He had made but a few steps, when he felt the clumsy and ill-contrived machine give way, and a second after, it fell to

pieces on the bottom of the retreat, and he lay, somewhat stunned, though not hurt, beside it. The crash awoke the priest and young O'Burke, as their alarmed cries soon testified. John Sharpe, uttering a grunt, half of apprehension, half of content, at what, in his heart, he regarded as a just judgment upon his backsliding captain, prepared to stand up from his sulky position on the middle of the floor, or ground, when other voices were heard calling out, overhead, and the ensuing moment, treble consternation, wreck, and uproar, reigned around, abroad, below, and above. It has been mentioned that old Rory and his youthful fellow-builder had not constructed their roof strong enough to resist an encroaching step on the outside; and now came a proof of their want of foresight; branches and boughs crackled, immediately over John Sharpe's head, and he had scarce time to look up, when, with extended arms and sprawling legs, the young gentleman, whom he and his master had lately seen kneeling at the cross, descended upon him, and landing astride on the shoulders of the confounded Enniskillener, suddenly grappled his ankles round John's throat, and brought him to the earth. And John only waited a return of his

breath to roar lustily, although his teeth still held his pipe as tight as crab's claws could have done; and to kick, and cuff, and writhe, and curse, and imprecate as furiously as if he had never called himself of the elect and regenerated, or as if his every-day prudence had not subdued, on all ordinary occasions, the sinful habit which, among many others, he was fond of laying at the doors of blaspheming papishes, exclusively. The bewildered priest, awaking amid such horrors, temporarily relapsed into all his former frightened insanity, and seconded John Sharpe with startling cries; Patrick O'Burke, losing his usual self-command, also cried aloud; Captain Pendergast, scrambling amid broken branches and boughs, and unable to see any thing, called, very angrily upon his servant, to cease his vile clamour, and come to his assistance; the two attendants of the young and gallant intruder stood upon the verge of the partial chasm he had made, and joined their voices to the uproar below; and Rory Laherty, who had been struck down by the limb of a tree,—one of his own vain rafters,—and whose fire and cookery lay hidden beneath a great portion of the roof, sent up the wildest ejaculations of all, clapping his hands

whenever he could free them of the many surrounding impediments.

The causer of all this confusion was the only person who made no outcry about it, and he was also the first to muster his presence of mind. John Sharpe had just uttered the words—a climax to many previous ones—"Off wi' ye from my throttle, ye unlucky papish! off wi' ye, and be d—d, ye stone-worshipper, and ye house-breaker! off wi' ye, I tell ye, or, by ——! ye shall have cold lead instead of hot meat, in your bread-basket, til your break'st, the morn!" John, we say, had just uttered these words, when his rider unclasped his legs from his neck and breast, laid himself on his back, drew up his limbs till the soles of his boots rested on the shoulders of the impatient animal he had lately bestrode, and saying, in a light tone, "There, then, old psalm-twanger!" shoved John many paces forward, among the litter of the fallen roof, and then springing to his feet, continued, "God save all here, this fine morning, and peace between us! and no offence, I hope, good people, in an intrusion that, assuredly, has been as much against my will as it can be against yours."

"And, before the Lord, you shall be taught

how much against our will it *is*," threatened John Sharpe, scrambling towards the speaker, as he prepared to draw his sword; "and how much against my will you have dared til kick me with the heels of your boots, in base requital for your first descent on my head, and my patient enduring of the same."

"Off with you, old limb of old Noll!" cried the stranger, also unsheathing his brilliant blade, "or I will send you to ask him how he likes his warm corner—you know where."

The young man's attendants now rushed down the sides of the almost fully-exposed hollow, crying out, in Irish, that none should touch their master; Rory, enlisted as their ally by the sound of their language, joined them; the priest clasped Patrick O'Burke in his arms, and held him apart from the scene; and Captain Pendergast, still doomed to be the only peace-maker, stepped between John Sharpe and new foes.

Wrenching the old sword from his man's hand, he threatened to visit him with its flat between the shoulders, if he did not fall aside, and leave unnoticed what could only have been an accident.

“Thanks, Sir,” resumed the young gentleman politely, and with a dash of courtier-like breeding, moving his fine-plumed hat, which he had just picked up from among the boughs and leaves; “and you have rightly understood the matter; so that to you I am assured I need not repeat that my coming in here was unintended; although I am no way unwilling to express my sorrow for the damage I have done, and the fright I must have occasioned.”

“We are content to set off your own fright against ours, Sir,” answered Pendergast; “seeing that, in all conscience, yours ought to be the greater: as for the damage, we can afford it, passing well, so long as there grow trees in the wood, and as a stag can be seen within shot, in the park, hard-by.”

“If that be all, then,” resumed the intruder, “I shall begin to think that I merit commiseration and fair apologies for having had a pit set for my life, more than any of ye, Sir, merit my excuses, that I could not keep my feet from the snare:” this was said in a laughing tone; “but, faith!” he continued, in a graver mood, “I feared some one might chance to have been hurt.”

“None of us say as much,” resumed Pendergast, looking round; “at least I answer for myself, and for my servant.”

“Oh, *he* has already answered, on his own account,” said the stranger. John Sharpe, suddenly changing into his mood of bitter irony, assented with his usual tame chuckle. “Come forward, Patrick O’Burke, and satisfy us concerning yourself and your tutor,” continued Captain Pendergast.

“Patrick O’Burke? is *he* here?” demanded the young man.

“I am Patrick O’Burke,” said the boy, at last disengaging himself from his anxious warden, and advancing.

“Then I embrace you, Patrick—the son of your father’s friend embraces you; and though both our fathers be taken from us, that is no reason why we should not prove friends to each other: I am Philip Walsh, Baron of Crana.”

“My father has often spoken of yours, indeed, Baron of Crana,” said the boy, accepting and returning in a manly style the French accolade which was proffered to him.

“Ay, and mine of yours, Patrick,” answered the young nobleman; “and knowing this, as well as in obedience to the last wishes of

the last Baron of Crana, here I came to——but, saints of Heaven! we must choose another audience-room, for this grows too hot to hold us.”

Although the timber and leaves of the roof had hidden Rory's fire for a time, they had not extinguished, but rather added fresh fuel to it; in fact, the flame had now spread amongst the branches and boughs which the young Baron of Crana had urged down upon the red turf used by the old man for his cooking, and came bursting out, through thick smoke, with a strength that promised to extend its ravages over all the inflammable materials in the pit, as well as upon the portion of the frail roof which still wavered overhead.

All readily assented to the young Baron's suggestion of removing to a more convenient place for conversation; and it became a real scramble up the obstructed sides of the pit, to the open plat which spread around from its edges, each individual of the party anxious to save himself. Arrived in the upper daylight, Rory caused a general digression from previous topics, by having recurrence to his hand-clapping system of alarm, and mourning over the destruction of the viands destined for breakfast. To supply the loss, Patrick O'Burke volunteer-

ed to hasten to the park, and shoot a buck with his cross-bow ; his new friend, the Baron of Crana, proposed, seemingly much amused, to try his pistols upon some wood-birds ; Pendergast commanded John Sharpe to follow Rory, with his carabine, to a rabbit-warren, and John acquiesced with a better grace than his master had expected, for he was hungry ; and thus, in a few moments, the group were scattered in different directions, all except Father James and his military patron ; and they, setting themselves down at opposite sides of the pile of stones, awaited in silence the return of the purveying party, each full of his own thoughts.

CHAPTER VI.

AFTER a silence of some length, Pendergast suddenly arose, stood before the priest, and asked him if the young O'Burke had hopes of succeeding to any portion of the property of his father. The clergyman, startled out of a deep and wayward reverie, looked up at his companion with all his former expression of fright and vagueness in his eyes, and made no answer. The question was repeated abruptly and somewhat impatiently ; at the same time, shots sounded near, from the Baron of Crana's pistols, and John Sharpe's carabine, and obviously losing consciousness of his real situation, and recollection of the recent events which had produced it, the priest shrank closer to the heap of stones, uttering feeble cries for mercy or, at the least, "for time—time! only a little time!"

Here Captain Pendergast again had to exert his ingenuity to lead back the poor man's mind from its wanderings; and, curbing his impatience with his pity, he was soon successful, or partially so. Once more the clergyman comprehended that, in the individual before him, he and his darling pupil, and old Rory, were called upon to recognise a protector: and when Pendergast a third time proposed his question—"His father's estate!" said the priest; "No, no; not a blade of grass of it is Patrick's—not a leaf of a tree."

"But the blades of grass and the trees remain, after all," urged the catechist.

"Remain not to him," persisted Father James. Pendergast alluded to the Treaty of Limerick. "We know, we know;—enjoyment of their estates to all comprehended in the treaty;—not to him; not to my dear pupil."

"Sir Redmond O'Burke's estate has been confiscated, then, under an outlawry, before his death?"

"Every sod, every bush, every stone! Ay, ay, outlawry, outlawry! God help us! God pity us!" his terrors again began to master him.

"At this rate, I have miscalculated, indeed,"

said the Captain, only speaking to himself, as he remembered how anxiously he had before interpreted the Treaty of Limerick in Patrick O'Burke's favour.

"What, what?" resumed the priest: "so disappointed, Sir Captain? The good Tipperary acres would indemnify for our housing, and feeding, and hiding: but now that you can reckon on none——"

Pendergast interrupted him sternly, to set him right; and it was remarkable that his decided manner had the effect of steadying instead of scaring the reasoning faculties of his wayward friend. Perhaps the manner and language of truth and sincerity at once convinced the sceptic, at the same time that Pendergast's frowning brow, fixed eye, and authoritative voice might have had an effect usual in most cases of mental aberration.

"Wonderful to hear," resumed Father James — "wonderful to hear, and a miracle to believe; one of our taskers, and one of our masters, and one of our persecutors, takes us into his house, and keeps us, and hides us—And our chapel?—will you build us a chapel, too? or give us leave for one under the roof that is to shelter us?"

Captain Pendergast replied that, renouncing in his heart, as he did, many of the observances of Popery, he could scarce think himself conscientiously free to permit, under his very roof, the performance of its ceremonies. Patrick O'Burke and his tutor might, nevertheless, find themselves uninterrupted in their religious duties at Pendergast-hall: Rony would have a little lodge in the grounds, close at hand, and they could visit him at their pleasure.

The priest seemed to understand this answer, and to be contented with it, and was growing calmer, when to give fresh excitement to his vibrating mind, the flames burst furiously out of the pit, near them, and the remnant of the deceitful roof fell in. He was, indeed, fast relapsing into mental confusion, when Patrick O'Burke appeared, leading back his purveying party, all now well laden with a supply for breakfast. But when his pupil sat by his side, and exchanged a few words with him, he seemed disposed to be happier than his friends had seen him since his visit to the den the previous night. Rony Laherty, John Sharpe, and—laughing at his task, and boasting of his success among the wood-pigeons—the young Baron of Crana, began to prepare the morning repast, and the

priest looked on, much pleased. They brought brands from the edge of the burning pit to make a fire for cooking their meat, and he rubbed his hands gleeishly, and laughed in a low key, often changing his eyes from their proceedings to Patrick's face.

Presently arose Rory Laherty's usual wailings at the recollection that his wine-cellar was choaked up by the burning mass of branches, reeds, and rushes. The young Baron seriously sympathized with him; but Pendergast suggested that a draught more healthy than wine, and more seemly for a morning meal, could be obtained near at hand, out of the clear bubbling spring.

"Fetch it, Rory," said Patrick, "if indeed you can find a vessel to raise the water: but your cup is gone at last, I reckon."

"Nien, nien, nien!" answered Rory, pulling the esteemed vessel out of his great pocket, and running to the spring.

The viands were ready for eating, and Pendergast, Patrick, Philip of Crana, and the Priest, sat down on the grass to partake of them; Rory, John Sharpe, and the Baron's attendants removing to some distance. The conversation of the principal party soon became interesting.

Pendergast inquired if the late Baron of Crana had been "out, on the late occasions?"

"Until the Boyne affair, Sir," answered the young nobleman; "and then there happened that to him which allows me this day to bear his title."

"You had an elder brother, Baron?" said Patrick.

"Yes, O'Burke; poor Roger! Hillsboro' was no success for him, though a boasted one for his cause. You will believe me, that I sorrow for Roger's death, as a brother for a brother whom he well loved; and yet his being alive now, would little serve either of us, except in the regard of loving one another still in misfortune."

Captain Pendergast said he did not understand.

"I speak no riddles, notwithstanding, Sir: had my brother Roger lived a day, an hour, a second after my father, and had the fact been known to our new keepers, he and I, and, worse of all, our only merry little sister, now sheltering in France, perhaps in Spain, were at present no more than penniless, nameless beggars on the face of the earth."—

"Like me," said Patrick O'Burke.

"—For," continued the Baron, "poor Roger,

for being one of the aptest foes of William and Mary from the very beginning, was outlawed in Meath, two years ago."

"Like my father," interrupted Patrick.

"Ay, O'Burke;" young Philip, tears in his eyes, and smiles on his lips, stretched his hand to the disinherited boy, and they exchanged in silence a gripping pressure.

"So that, had your father's estate, Baron," said Pendergast, "been possessed, for any the shortest time, by your outlawed brother—"

"That is," interrupted the Baron, "as I have declared before, had Roger but lived an hour after my father, without ever really possessing his estate, and no matter how remote from the country in which it lies, he must have been regarded as its owner; and it would have passed away from him, from me, from Dorcas our sister, from us and ours, for ever."

"Well; and now that a chance, which we know not whether to call lucky or ill, preserves it to you, Baron of Crana, we will hope that you feel contented with the late arrangements, by virtue of which that chance turns up in your favour," resumed Pendergast.

"Contented? ay, by St. Louis and St. Patrick! The double crown need not reckon on a

better Irish subject than Philip Walsh. I have been in France, Mr. Pendergast, and there learned to enjoy life ; to live while I live, and be thankful to those who leave me the means so to do. Besides, St. Germain's is in France, and I have spent a day there too, and had my opportunities for reading the character of the man on whose account we have all been putting ourselves to some trouble, and running some chance of damage to the fair acres God bestowed on us, if not of peril to our precious persons also. And so, Sir, a merry life of peace for me, in the hunt, on the bowling-green, and at a merry board, (with something at my right hand stronger than Rory's morning draught,) instead of hard knocks and short commons in the service of old Shamus."

"Heartily spoken, Baron of Crana ; and, in truth, there is little to lament over in the loss of your late master," observed Pendergast.

"Except the losses he has caused us. But no matter ; *vive la gaitè !*—that is, in English, or in Irish rather, long life to merry fellows ! ay, and *vive* little Willy too ! he's no bad king to me, and if I run the hazard of making him a worse one to me, say I shall deserve the consequences. Experience, come at what age it will,

makes us wise—or selfish, if you like, Sir,—wise still, I say: and, young as I am, I have sufficiently known reverses of fortune to like a good prospect at the last; ay, and though I profess my disrelish of fighting, to-day, have fought enough into the bargain, to give me a title to rest at peace during the next ten years, and the next twenty, thirty, after that, if I can help it. So, Mr. Pendergast—Captain Pendergast, I should say—I drink to your good health, and to the most excellent welfare of their anointed Majesties King William and—but I crave your pardon; ever I forget that we are put off with Adam’s ale this cold morning.”

“And your pleasant discourse makes me forget that I, and some others of this company, should be in our saddles an hour ago,” said Pendergast, rising.

“That brings me to speak of my true business here,” resumed the Baron. “While away from you, Sir, to help in providing our breakfast, Patrick O’Burke gave me to understand why we meet each other on the lands that are no longer his; therefore I do not hesitate to inform you that I, as well as you, rode hither from Limerick, to claim the acquaintance and friendship of the last O’Burke, and invite him to visit

me at my castle, whither I am directly bound : and notwithstanding his story of your first right to do him a kindness, I still have hopes that, in recollection of the love long interchanged between his father and mine, to say nothing of our agreement in certain important matters touching which you and Patrick can never hope to agree, you will waive your honourable intentions towards him, in my favour, and allow me to take the boy home to the old Castle of Crana."

"Let Patrick O'Burke speak first," said Pendergast.

"I have spoken, Sir," replied Patrick, "when the Baron of Crana addressed me so kindly, and we watching a buck, at the wood's edge, an hour ago."

"For or against me, Patrick?"

"For obeying the last breath of my father, and following to the world's end his *last friend*, Sir."

"Thanks, my boy ; though, be assured, had your opinion gone differently, it was not my purpose to allow it to part us. Mine is a trust which must not be broken. Meanwhile, I am glad, for your sake, that Heaven raises you up another anxious friend in this plain-spoken

and generous young nobleman ; and Patrick, entreat him to ride with us a little way North, before he revisits his own castle, and judge how he shall like the son of his father's friend at Pendergast-hall ; after which entreaty, we must mount our horses, and make the most of this sun-shiny day."

The Baron of Crana could not be persuaded, however, to turn aside from his road, at the present. He had, he said, to make order out of confusion, in his long-uninhabited house ; and then he would be bound to visit his sister in Spain, where he believed she was now protected. But, yielding to Pendergast's unostentatious invitations, he consented to visit his young friend, at no distant time, under the Captain's roof ; and, upon this understanding, all prepared for their separate journeys.

It now became a question how Patrick and the priest should be mounted : as to Rory, he regarded the want of a horse as the least possible inconvenience, cheerfully stipulating to trot on at the side of his young master. But two horses were indispensable for the pupil and tutor ; and Philip of Crana insisted that those belonging to his attendants should be accepted by Patrick and the Priest, while the men could

follow him afoot to the nearest place where they might expect to be remounted.

“And until we can procure a horse for Rory Laherty, on our road home,” said Pendergast, “you, John, will now and then give him a lift behind your saddle.”

“George Walker, which is the name of my horse, given unto him in honour of the hero of Derry, will not carry double for king or deevil,” answered John Sharpe. “I tried him once, yon, after the Aughran business, with a loyal mon, not to talk of a Papish, and his hinder heels flew up in the air, as if it was the very Pope of Rome he felt near his crupper.”

“Then you and Rory must ride and tie, John,” resumed his master; and this was said in a voice and with a look from which John understood no appeal.

“Now, Rory, go for Brann,” said Patrick O’Burke, the tears springing to his eyes, as the preparations for travelling proceeded: and Rory, darting into the wood, disappeared.

“And who is Brann, Patrick?” asked Pendergast. The boy answered that Brann was the name of a dog—a young whelp, indeed, to which he was much attached. His father, he said, had taken great pains to preserve the breed

of the old wolf-hound, or stag-hound, of Ireland, and many of them had been about their house until the coming of King William's soldiers, when, in consequence of their inveterate, and, indeed, dangerous hostility to the intruders, they had all been shot—all except the whelp, Brann, who followed Patrick to the woods. "So that he is the last of his race, like his master," added the boy; "and while Rory and I hid ourselves in the hole where you passed the night, Sir, we thought it well to remove Brann to a good distance, and tie him up there, lest his yelpings, if by our side, might guide enemies to our den: but he has been well fed, and often visited during the day, and had a soft bed to lie on, and a little shed to cover him."

While Patrick spoke, his friend Brann came bounding out of the wood, followed by Rory, and jumped upon his young master with such headlong joy, that he threw him down. Captain Pendergast viewed with surprise the stature of the animal whom Patrick had described as not full grown, observing, that if Brann had yet to grow much more, he would end in being a canine giant. Patrick assured his protector that he had not attained half his size. Some moments afterwards, the whole party were mak-

ing way through the wood to the broad avenue, such of them as had horses leading the animals along. They gained the avenue, and all except Rory and the Baron's attendants mounted to their saddles. The cavalcade moved towards the valley by which Pendergast had approached the ruined house the night before; and now, Rory Laherty's wild cries and lamentations rang far and wide among the hills and woods. Pendergast stole a glance at Patrick. His lips were firmly closed, and he seemed to swallow the tears which only glistened in his eye. He gazed on straight before him, and would not look either to the right or to the left, nor yet turn round to catch for the last time a glimpse of his ruined home. Rory's outcries grew louder, and he bade him hold his peace.

The travellers emerged from the valley upon the wretched road which ran across its entrance. A few miles onward, they came to the spot at which the Baron of Crana was to turn off on his way to his own castle. The adieu between him and young O'Burke was warm and hearty on his part; Patrick felt it more deeply, though he spoke little. "You know which way to ride, if you want a friend, O'Burke," said the young Baron, pointing to the road he was about

to take, and an instant afterwards he spurred his horse over it, followed by his dismounted servants.

“And now for Pendergast Hall, Patrick,” said Pendergast; and the other travellers pushed forward in the opposite direction, Rory and Brann rivalling each other in the use of their own legs.

John Sharpe had gradually recovered from the ill-humour raised in him by his master's injunctions that he should ride-and-tie with Rory Laherty, until a horse could be procured for the old gamekeeper. The first incident which diverted him was the priest's preparations for mounting his steed. When John saw the nervous poor man tucking up his long, torn robe, at either side, and then awkwardly, and after several failures, climbing to his saddle, he looked on with a sneering, lugubrious smile of mingled astonishment, mirth, and contempt, which now and then was farther modified by some misgivings as to the decency of the exhibition, and a confused impression that all he beheld was miserable superstition, profaneness, and a novel and curious illustration of the nastiness of the Beast of Rome. Rory's outcries and extravagance then added to his supercilious mirth;

and as all at last moved forward, after parting from the young popish nobleman, whose title, star, manners, and every thing connected with him, seemed utter farce in the trooper's eyes, John Sharpe, glancing from the meagre, half-bent figure of the Priest, to the grotesque one of Rory Laherty, as he trotted, leading Brann, at his stirrup, and then to the bare-headed, poorly-attired boy who rode beside his master, said between his teeth and his pipe, in an exceeding chuckle, "Well; get us, now, but a bear and an ape, and we are fit to make our round of all the fairs, till Midsummer; troth, jest!"

CHAPTER VII.

PENDERGAST halted his party a few days at Clonmel, and here some provocations to John Sharpe's irony were removed. Patrick O'Burke put off his old clothes for a suit more fitted to his condition and change of fortune; Father James was prevailed upon to substitute for his ragged serge robe, and the thread-bare appendages under it, a more ordinary dress of black; Rory Laherty became also improved in his outward man, and moreover was elevated on horseback.

Again the travellers moved rapidly forward, and reached Dublin. In this city Captain Pendergast had some friends, and he hastened to make known among them his arrival from the South, glad of an opportunity of conversing with intelligent persons upon the public topics of the day, an indulgence so long denied

to him. He was anxious to find confirmed his own sanguine hopes that the late termination of the Civil war was acceptable among all parties, and likely, from national unanimity, to ensure the future peace and good of Ireland. Pendergast also felt solicitous to ascertain whether or not the temper of the times boded good or ill luck to his adopted son, or promised well for Patrick's comfort and happiness at Pendergast Hall.

It was upon a Sunday morning that, leaving the boy, Father James, and old Rroy, to find out some place of devotion for themselves, he went out, attended by John Sharpe, proposing first to call at a friend's house, and then repair to church. His friend was at home, at breakfast, surrounded by many other gentlemen, and the visitor soon heard discussed the topics which so much interested him—but not in the way he had anticipated. To his surprise and regret, every voice was lifted up against the Treaty of Limerick, as a measure of undeserved leniency and favour to King James's adherents, and of ungrateful injustice to King William's. The speaker represented the expectation of the Protestants of Ireland to have extended to the total suppression of Popery, the total confisca-

tion of the estates and goods of every man who had drawn a sword for James, and the conferring of such property upon those who had distinguished themselves as zealous supporters of William and Mary. And the object at which these sentiments seemed to aim, and the great hope of the malcontents, was, that the parliaments of England and of Ireland would not ratify the Treaty of Limerick, but rather yield to their remonstrances against it.

Captain Pendergast submitted, in vain, the injustice of such an expectation. He reminded his friends that the treaty was fairly the result of the formidable attitude of James's Irish partizans, and of Ginkle's perception and admission of what they had done, and what they might do. He objected to have his Roman Catholic countrymen considered as rebels for their support of a monarch to whom they had sworn allegiance, and who had never been deposed by the vote of an Irish Parliament. He exclaimed against the inconsequential reasoning which would now oppress Catholics more than they had been oppressed at the end of the reign of Charles II. merely because they were Catholics, particularly by breaking through a solemn treaty. And most of all, he expatiated

upon the hope which that treaty, if acted upon, held out, to all men of just minds and cool temperaments, of the national prosperity of Ireland, promoted, in union, by her children of every creed, equally free, or very nearly so, to lend her the assistance of their talents and energies. In vain, we say, did Pendergast urge these arguments. Thirst of monopoly, sectarian rancour, and colonial jealousy, united to make his hearers deaf at heart to his appeal: and in much sorrow, and some anger, he bade his friends good morning, and again joined by Sharpe, bent his way to the church where, as he had been informed, the Archbishop of Meath was expected to preach, before high authorities of the land, upon the self-same subject which he had just been discussing.

John Sharpe walked behind his master with an elated step, a high head, and every now and then a heart-comforting chuckle. He had heard quite as much in the kitchen of the house they had visited, as his captain had heard in the parlour, and his soul was glad within him accordingly. “It won’t do,” Pendergast heard him say—“it won’t do, this time: no petticoat priests cocked up a-horseback; with their knees going til scratch their ears;—

ugh, ugh; no Baron-me-that, and Sir Pat-me-this, let go to canter it, and tatter it, and hell-rake it about the country—ugh, ugh.”

Much inclined to turn round upon his man, and yet forbearing to notice him, Pendergast gained Christ Church. Doctor Dopping, Archbishop of Meath, mounted the pulpit, and in the face of the representatives of power in Ireland, as well as to a numerous congregation, propounded the same doctrines, touching the politics of the day, which Pendergast had heard broached in his friend's house, with this difference only, that from the mouth of the zealous dignitary they came mended in syllogistical array, in energy, and in the aids of language. The moderate-minded, though perfectly loyal and Protestant hearer, felt his grief and indignation rise stronger within him; and he at last moved to leave the church, when, in allusion to Pendergast's favourite treaty, Dr. Dopping distinctly laid down the propositions that faith was not to be kept with Papists.

Captain Pendergast looked to the form, outside the pews, upon which John Sharpe sat, in order to give his man a signal to arise and accompany him homeward. With his knees wide

apart, his bony hands grasping them, his body bent forward, and a smile of the kindest approbation, John's eyes were fixed on the preacher. In vain his master strove to catch his glance; it was immovable. His lips, however, often moved, either unconsciously repeating words that his soul drank in like a cordial, or blessing the author of them; and sometimes they seemed to water, either in extreme delight, or perhaps as an unbidden thought of his pipe crossed his mind—his pipe, which, out of deference to the sacred roof, he had reluctantly forced from between his teeth at the church-door, and folded up in a linen rag, and put in his pocket.

After watching him a long while, Pendergast at length caught John's eye, and gave him a signal. But John, quickly reverting his regards to the Archbishop of Meath, pretended not to have noticed the occurrence, and thenceforward his master stood little chance of being honoured with a look from him. Pendergast was leaving the church alone, determined to take vengeance on his refractory servant the earliest opportunity, when the sermon ended, and, ere he could bustle through the crowd, John Sharpe joined

him, his pipe in his hand, ready to be resumed the moment they should cross the threshold.

“How durst you, sirrah, disregard the sign I made to you to stand up, and leave the church?” demanded Pendergast.

“The sign your honour made til me?” repeated John, as he stopped to light his touch-paper, very deliberately: “as I am a Christian man, I saw your worship make no sign til me, the morn; or if your honour did make one, and that my eyes were turned so as to see it, doubtless they were blinded from seeing any thing but that blessed man, as my ears were deaf to any sounds but the blessed words of his mouth.”

“I fear you lie, John, very particularly; but home, Sir, now that your nose-funnel is a-smoking; this is not the place to speak with you.”

“A heavenly man!” continued John, as he strode happily after Captain Pendergast—“a light, and a burning star; troth jest! a jewel of a man;—it won’t—no; it won’t do with them, this time; hugh;—troth, no.”

Forgetting, in his bustle to leave Dublin, his momentary dudgeon against his follower, Captain Pendergast gave orders for travelling north-

ward that very day, and, after an early dinner, he, and all those depending upon his motives, bade adieu to the capital. His mind was saddened so much, he spoke less than usual to his young protégée. “If,” he argued—“if such be the current opinions and feelings in Dublin, upon this treaty, what must I expect to find them a hundred miles farther north?”

With little adventure, our party gained Pendergast Hall, a plain but respectable square house, with wings and out-offices, well-sheltered by trees, and surrounded by fertile fields, gardens, and plantations: and during his journey from Dublin to his old home, and after his arrival there, Pendergast experienced no disappointment of his anticipations of the fervour of party hostility against the measure he would fain get all to be content with, but which few indeed considered as he did.

In these pages, as well as in others which the writers have submitted to their readers, an endeavour has been made to guard against prejudices of country and creed, while alluding to historical events necessarily bearing upon the task in hand. Upon former occasions, whenever the words of a neutral, or even an adverse his-

torian could be found to convey, briefly, the information required, he has spoken to the reader—and oftener, perhaps, than some readers gave him or his transcribers credit for. In the same view, some chapters back, an abstract of the Treaty of Limerick has been supplied from a well-known English historian; and now, lest we should be suspected of exaggerating the opposition to that treaty immediately after its occurrence, the same authority is here quoted, almost in continuation of the former extract:—

“The Protestant subjects of Ireland were extremely disgusted at these concessions, *made in favour of vanquished rebels*, who had exercised such acts of cruelty and rapine. They complained, that they themselves, who had suffered for their loyalty to King William, were neglected, and obliged to sit down with their losses; while their enemies, who had shed so much blood in opposing his government, were indemnified by the articles of the capitulation, and were favoured with particular indulgences. *They were dismissed with the honours of war*: they were transported, at the Government’s expense, to fight against the English in foreign countries; an honourable provision was made

for the Rapparees, who were professed banditti : *the Roman Catholic interest in Ireland obtained the sanction of regal authority ;* attainders were overlooked, forfeitures annulled, pardons extended, and the laws set aside, in order to obtain a pacification."

Smollett adds, as a kind of answer on his own account to these angry objections, that "Ginkle had received orders to put an end to the war, at any rate."

And such were the comments upon his esteemed treaty which now assailed Captain Pendergast from every quarter, and, he foresaw, would succeed in breaking through it, and so re-deliver the land to sectarian tyranny and national degradation. Such, in fact, were the comments which *did* break through it, and by which, in consequence, Ireland was made a country without a people, a province of the rule of griping colonists over millions of wretched, wretched slaves. But it is best said — and perhaps it should only have been said — such were the comments which, by leading to a breach of Ireland's "charter of civil and religious rights," and, at the same time, sharpening the already keen scent of monopoly, influenced and prescribed

the fortunes of the greater number of the individuals yet introduced to the reader, and of others who are still to be made known to him.

A few days after his arrival at home, Captain Pendergast had arranged his establishment in all its different departments. Patrick O'Burke had his chamber and his study ; so had Father James ; and suitable books were supplied to both. Foreseeing future discussions and difficulties, Pendergast caused Patrick to prevail on the priest to allow himself to be called Mr. James, simply, without any title indicating his clerical character ; and with much difficulty the boy accomplished his allotted task, so vibrating and unsettled, so moody and wayward was still the mind of his poor tutor. John Sharpe, at peril of all he held dearest in the world, namely, his place, and his master's friendship, was charged to hold his tongue regarding the incognito clergyman ; and Rory also received many necessary lectures upon acting a prudent part. It should not be forgotten that the new land-steward took formal possession of his comfortable house, some distance from the principal mansion ; nor that Rory Laherty established himself in the wood-hut, where he was to reign

supreme over partridges, woodcocks, snipes, hares, and rabbits. And the Sunday following his day of possession, Rory was on the look-out for Father James and Patrick O'Burke, to enter his dwelling by a private approach, and the three isolated Papists enjoyed their religious observance together.

CHAPTER VIII.

PATRICK O'BURKE gradually improved in letters, under the secret instructions of Father James, and in manly sports and exercises, under the more open tuition of Rory Laherty, and, strange as it may seem, of John Sharpe: but of this latter fact more shall hereafter be said. It is first to be noticed, that neither his mental occupation in the house, nor his recreations out of doors, nor even the parental kindness of Pendergast, could for some time dissipate the grave and almost stern reserve of manner which the boy brought to the abode of his protector, and which, in one so young, was sometimes disagreeable, sometimes touching, to observe. Pendergast watched him closely, and at last believing he had discerned the cause of this unnatural gloom of mind, partially succeeded in removing it. He took an opportunity of

obtaining from Patrick an admission, to the effect that he regarded himself as a poor and unentitled dependent upon the bounty of a stranger; and that not all the affection with which he was treated, nor even the last wishes of his father, could reconcile his spirit to a lot so humiliating.

“But, Patrick, this is an error,” said Pendergast; “for, though your father’s estates be, for the present, and, according to words of law, estreated for ever from you, still I do not despair of seeing them restored, in part, at least, to your father’s son:—wait but a few years till the times settle down into more assured quietness, and then judge of your chance.”

Patrick’s eyes brightened at this unfounded promise, which, indeed, Pendergast made only for the attainment of the amiable object he had in view: and after an instant’s more serious reflection, said—“’Tis a pleasing hope, Sir; yet, what prospect have we of more settled times, when, day after day, they grow worse in party hatred? When, instead of permitting the disinherited Catholic to recover the lands of his fathers, most men of your persuasion try all means to discover a bad title, as your laws call

it, in the holdings of such Catholics as have hitherto escaped confiscation?"

Pendergast fully felt the truth and force of the boy's reasoning; but it was not his policy to admit that he did: on the contrary, he again found a ready answer for Patrick's doubts, who, finally, had no more to say than—"I will keep strict and honourable account, then, Mr. Pendergast, of my obligations to you, until the good day you speak of comes:" and when his friend, still humouring the prejudices he wished to soothe down, for Patrick's own sake, seemingly assented to this arrangement, they parted upon a better understanding with each other than had previously been established between them, and from that day forward Patrick's brow rose, and he felt, and looked happy.

This change in his disposition, producing a corresponding change in his manner and actions, gained him friends on all hands. And now commenced John Sharpe's interest in Patrick. Hitherto, the old soldier had hated, with his habitual strength, the coldness (which to him was haughtiness) of the young O'Burke; John called it "ould, ill-flavoured, grandee-Papish pride," and turned up his nose, or laughed

shortly and bitterly at it, upon all occasions. But when Patrick became an altered person; when he greeted John with smiles, as they met in the fields; when with a careless good-humour, he gave him laugh for laugh, and *would* be a friend of his, cost what it might; when he oftener took a gun in his hand, and killed more game than he used to do, and, above all things, took braver leaps, over stream or hedge, upon his hunting-pole, as he coursed the hare: when all this came repeatedly under the land-steward's observation, a great revolution ensued in his feelings towards his master's adopted son. At first, indeed, the revolution made little in Patrick's favour, for John's loathing only turned into indignation at what he chose to regard as audacity, as, in fact, a wanton presuming in one situated like "the ould rebel's spawn." But, by degrees, a recurrence of similar provocations to his anger, instead of confirming his dislike and testiness, won his heart, just as some ladies' hearts are said to be won; and, to his own astonishment, often muttered to himself, between the black shank of his short pipe and his teeth, as black as it, he at last found himself disposed to manifest a gruff friendship for his young tormentor.

Some accidents served to fix his liking for ever: and of these, one shall be recounted which could have produced good-will in the bosom of no other man than John Sharpe; and another, which proved that the heart in that bosom was made of better stuff than its owner would condescend to admit, or perhaps suspected it of.

His growing inclination towards Patrick began to show itself by his meeting him and the old gamekeeper upon their sporting-excursions, and at first railing against both for some attributed lack of skill in the management of their weapons, or in their pursuit of game, and then supplying fraptious instructions for "a more christian and ceevilized method in field sports." He did not spare old Rory rebukes, severe and satirical, yet half composed of supercilious witticisms, explained by his laconic laughs, upon the scandal of training up his young charge in a manner so unworthy; and finally, he would venture to take the gun or the salmon-spear out of Rory's hands, for the purpose of showing him a wild-duck or a fish might be killed, according to the best rules.

John was not always as successful as he promised to be; but neither Rory nor Patrick no-

ticed his failures so as to vex him. In fact, the shrewd, though almost wild old man, saw that, for the interests of his beloved foster-son, as well as of himself, (or else for quietness' sake,) it behoved him to live on good terms with the land-steward, and he would not therefore touch his vanity in any sensitive point: and Patrick too much relished John's peculiarities to deprive himself, by an open rupture, of opportunities for waggish experiments upon them, many of which he successfully attempted, with a grave face, on his own part, with the most imperturbable affectation of unconsciousness on Rory's part, and with scarce a suspicion, at the time, on John's part, of the laugh enjoyed at his expense.

One winter's day they met, as usual, upon the verge of an extensive bog, to which wild-geese made an occasional visit. As Sharpe came up with the sportsmen, Patrick and Rory had just fired together at one of these birds, and missed it. John's contemptuous disapprobation was soon expressed, and calling upon them to mark the flight, and the second descent of the startled goose, he vauntingly proposed to follow it himself, and show them how to make sure of it;—nay, he engaged to hit the bird with a sin-

gle ball, at any distance within a hundred and fifty yards. All eyes accordingly tracked the goose round the bog, and the place where it at length pitched. John then handed his piece, his old musket—he would use no other—to Patrick, in order that the boy's own hands might draw the charge of shot, and substitute a ball. The goose rose again, during these operations, and before Patrick had rammed the ball home, John hastened off to watch the proceedings of his marked victim, giving orders that his musket should be borne after him. So soon as he turned his back, Patrick added a double charge of powder, and, along with the ball, a handful of large shot, reckoning to put the steward in for an unexpected rebound of the heavy piece, but at the same time assured that its solid and approved construction would not expose him to material danger from the unusual explosion. This done, he and Rory followed, according to orders.

They found Sharpe on his knees behind a low fence, at another point of the edge of the bog. His neck was stretched out, his eyes fixed, and, as he heard them approach, he made signs with his hands behind his back, that they should tread cautiously, and give him the mus-

ket without delay: "She's a-sunning her ain sel, on yon tuft," he whispered, while Patrick, creeping up to him, handed the deadly weapon; "not thinking, a-bit, who's looking at her; troth, jest, no; hu, ugh!" and as he spoke, John first tapped the red tobacco in his pipe, to give it new life, and then slowly raised the piece to his left shoulder—for he was what is called left-handed, and, even in the battle-field, had always presented his favourite musket in the same fashion;—"well; now for til tell her I'm here," he continued, taking malignant aim. Patrick had stepped back, out of all possible danger; Rory had not advanced within its scope: John pulled the trigger; a report, as if from a field-piece, mingled with an imperfected scream from the goose, and a short bellow from the marksman, followed: at the same time that the one was seen to spring high in air, and then fall dead, almost annihilated indeed, and the other to tumble backward, and roll into a slough. Neither Rory nor Patrick added a laugh to the mixture of jarring and horrid sounds, for the old man completely controlled much heartfelt mirth, and the author of the mischief continued to subdue his own joyous hysteric.

“ ’Twas your master bid ye do that ?” were the first distinct words they heard Sharpe utter, as he emerged, scrambling, through the white cloud of smoke in which he was enveloped ; and they were not a little surprised to note that neither his speech nor tones expressed the great wrath they had prepared themselves to encounter ; —
“ ’Twas your master bid you do that, Sir Paddy O’Burke ?” he continued, limping towards them, his right hand tenderly rubbing his left shoulder.

“ *My* master ?” questioned Patrick ; “ what mean you, John, by *my* master ?”

“ Troth, jest ;—your master, lad,” resumed Sharpe.

“ Explain your words, I say, man :” Patrick’s face reddened ; he feared some spiteful and coarse allusion to his dependent situation ; —“ I am my own master, and neither have, nor will have another.”

“ Nathless, it was your master bid you do it til me,” persisted John Sharpe, now confronting the boy close, and grinning in such a fashion into his face, that it was difficult to say whether he relished and forgave the joke, or was only nursing his anger into a high and vicious explosion.

“ Who, I demand to know, again ?”

“ His ain sel, and na ither for him,” pursued John.

“ Would you insult me, old John Sharpe ? I tell you I own no master living !” and Patrick now spoke impatiently.

“ Nien ; but the one All-masther, high up,” added Rory, in a pious, peace-making tone, as he pointed upwards, and pulled his foster-son’s skirts to exhort him to keep his temper.

“ But it wasna *He*,” said John, turning his grinning face upon Rory, who drew back ; “ it wasna *He* ; na, troth ; it was your hopeful bairn’s true master ; the t’other,—and weel ye ken who ;” here he pointed as emphatically downward, twice or thrice, as Rory had pointed upwards ; “ the gude ould di’el, ye ken ; troth, jest,” and John ended his tardy explanation, by giving one of his unique laughs, to which, after assuring himself that it was really meant for good-humour, Patrick contributed a much more joyous one, and even old Rory could not now command the excellent discipline of his rough and wild features. And from this hour John Sharpe openly professed himself the admirer of Patrick O’Burke. It will not be

attempted to explain how ; so it was, and no more can be said.

The other occurrence which confirmed his wayward liking, was more useful to Patrick, (only so far, however, as it gave a certain determination to the old soldier's patronage,) than the mere amusing adventure just recounted : and it happened a long time afterwards, when Patrick O'Burke had completed his twenty-fifth year.

Rory Laherty, in his capacity as gamekeeper, had several times represented to Mr. Pendergast, that a person from the neighbouring city was in the habit of intruding on the grounds, attended by two dogs, one a well-trained spaniel, the other a fierce and very ugly bull-bitch, and killing and carrying off whatever game he wished. Pendergast gave orders that Rory should warn the marauder to stay away. Rory complied ; but his injunctions were lightly treated ; and when he remonstrated in a higher tone, the bold stranger spoke aside to his bull-bitch, who immediately grinned like a demon, thus indicating the nature of her office on the sporting field. In fact, it was plain to be seen that the citizen carried on his war against rab-

bits, and birds of all kinds, under her guardianship. Nor was this the only threat put forward by her master. He uttered, at the same time, vague hints of having Rory in his power, as one in bad esteem with the laws of the land; nay, he added, that there were some people in the house itself, (meaning Mr. Pendergast's,) who might rue the day they vexed him.

Again Rory applied to Pendergast, and that gentleman became thoughtful and cautious when he had heard the old gamekeeper's whole story. "We shall see," he said—"we shall see who this great and dangerous man is, Rory."

A few hours afterwards, Mr. Pendergast rode into the city, made the necessary inquiries, and from their result concluded that, indeed, the invader of his grounds was not a person whose anger ought to be lightly roused; nor, considering the nature of the times, and Pendergast's situation with respect to the three Roman Catholics under his protection, whose threats ought to be disregarded.

In those days, bull-baiting was a favourite and even elevated amusement with our ancestors, although not fully enjoying the *éclat* which attached to it in times more remote. Still, it kept up, however, much of its ancient attrac-

tion for all ranks, and for both sexes, and its periodical occurrence was a kind of public fête. In most of the considerable towns of Ireland, the superintendence of the civilized sport was committed to the care of some bold, dashing young bachelor, of the trading class, called the "Mayor of Bull-ring;" (his predecessors had boasted a more sounding title—"Lord of Bull-ring;") and he had his sheriffs of bull-ring, and other attendants; and was permitted, or rather made responsible for the honour of defraying part of the expenses of the exhibition, while the guild of the town or city supplied the rest. Nay, his high office collaterally conferred upon him another trust, namely, that of "Guardian of Bachelors," as it was called; and upon the marriage of each of his wards, he invariably held a distinguished place at the thronged nuptial feast.

From this statement, it will be seen that the Mayor of Bull-ring could scarce be a very industrious individual, or one of regular and temperate habits, or, in fact, of good character. Among the population of a considerable town, bachelors often changed their estate; bull-baits also were frequent; so that a due attention to the double responsibility of his office, left him

little time for more useful perseverance in trade or manufacture. In truth, his whole time passed either in festivity, or in blustering preparations for the sport of which he was the master, or else in superintending its actual display ; or if, now and then, he had a day's leisure, the habits of his mind naturally sent him to seek recreation in some way congenial to his usual pursuits ; such as the enjoyment of the bowling-green, or of the shiebeen-house ; or, if he could afford it, (and sometimes whether he could or not,) of the sporting or the hunting field.

Now, the present Mayor of Bull-ring of the city near to Mr. Pendergast's mansion, was the person of whom Rory Laherty had so much to complain ; and never had a bolder bachelor filled that ancient office. His earliest boyhood had given promise of his almost unrivalled claims to discharge its duties with spirit and effect. The only son of a wealthy glover and leather-breeches maker, he flung down, at his twelfth year, the scissors, thimble, and needle, and entered upon a most popular career, in the estimation, at least, of all " gay blades" of his own turn of mind. His fond parent, half admiring his mettle, while he openly took him to task, supplied him with money, " to keep the

poor fool from starvation on the streets," as he expressed it: in process of time, "the poor fool," not finding his father's liberality sufficient for all his own other purposes, made free with the till in the shop, and perhaps with the strong-box above-stairs, and became banished from the paternal roof. Still no decrease ensued in his round of pleasures, nay, in his means of supporting them; and convivial souls, like himself, never suspecting him of "bad ways," only laughed heartily in approval of the genius which, by some process unknown to the vulgar, kept John Gernon's purse so well filled. True, upon many occasions previous to his unanimous election as Mayor of Bull-ring, he had disappeared from among them, and, each time, stayed weeks away, no one could surmise where, or on what business: but, although envious tongues cautiously hinted certain resolutions of the little mystery, John suffered nought in more generous and more popular opinion.

It may be surmised, that this reigning favourite of the dashing bachelors of his community boasted a form and features suited to the brave rank he held in the world, as well as to what is generally known to be one of the great requisites sought in such a public representative, elected

by such constituents. This was not, however, the case. John Gernon's face was square, sal-low, and almost beardless, though he had passed the age of manhood ; his eyes were unpleasing, his mouth was hard, and seldom tempered by a smile ; and as for his figure, it was low and square, and his legs were inclined to be bandy. He made up, however, in strength, for what he lacked in comeliness. John had boxed, through boyhood and manhood, every contemporary worthy of notice, and never found one who could resist the power of his shoulders and arms, or much disturb him on his well-jointed, ungraceful, bandy legs : and perhaps a chief cause for this might be found in the fact, that he had never met among them a heart and a mind so truly courageous, in an animal sense, as his own ; so impervious to a thought of yielding ; so tranquilly certain of success in any struggle for personal superiority.

And such, Mr. Pendergast ascertained, was the difficult person he had now to deal with, as an intruder upon his grounds. Other traits of John Gernon's character gave him still less satisfaction. In pretended alarm of the treasonable designs of Roman Catholics, but really for the purpose of supporting the new laws directed

against them, it had become fashionable in all large towns to form, among the citizens, military companies, horse as well as foot, who, after receiving arms from the authorities, clothed themselves, and served without pay, that is, mustered every Sunday for parade, and went through their evolutions as well as they knew how. Of these bands, in John Gernon's native city, one was emphatically called "The Bachelors' company," and he, of course, became its captain. Indeed, had not his other dignities, and his previously admitted excellence, made this last election a matter of course, his remarkable loyalty, and inherited dislike of "Popery, slavery, brass sixpences, and wooden shoes," would have almost ensured it. For, of the very loyal of those times, John proclaimed himself the veriest ; and so minutely did he cause the administration of all his offices of power to verify the fact, that the only bachelor's feast he was ever known to decline attending, was that of a Catholic ; and the only dog he ever turned out of the bull-ring, was also of Popish blood.

It was evident, therefore, to Pendergast's good sense, that of such a man he must not make an open enemy. He found, indeed, that however John's wild ways might sink him in the private

estimation of the reflective and respectable, and necessarily, of those in civil authority in the city, his political zeal served to establish between him and them a good public understanding; that their ears were open to his counsel, touching matters of state-expediency, and their inflamed prejudices but too active to second any salutary hint he might afford. Of John Gernon, then, whose character and disposition would readily propose, in revenge for harsh treatment, summary persecution of the proscribed papists in his house, and whose political influence was of sufficient weight to insure the success of his measure, Pendergast determined to stand as free as possible. And in this wise view, after gaining all the information required, he rode back to his hitherto peaceful mansion.

It was his intent to warn Rory Laherty and Patrick O'Burke of the peril they were in, and to advise them to avoid all future contentions with Gernon and his ugly bull-bitch. But fate had so ordered it, that his good instructions partly came too late, and partly were doomed to be disregarded.

CHAPTER IX.

ALTHOUGH Father James, after his domestication in the house of his good patron, showed little of the wildness of mind which had characterized him at their first meeting; although he proved himself fully competent to the task of perfecting Patrick's education, and to the still more difficult one of concealing his own calling; it was evident, notwithstanding that his intellects had not recovered, and scarcely ever could be expected to recover, the great shock they had received during the visit of King William's soldiers to Sir Redmond O'Burke's mansion.

This fixed though modified imbecility of the concealed priest was observable in different ways. He never left his room but at meal-times, or, now and then, when he hurried out of the house, by a back-door, to meet Patrick in Rory Laherty's hut, for religious purposes,

or to bury himself in the depths of some remarkable seclusion, that he might there read, out of his breviary, the allotted offices for the day: and, upon these occasions, he would sometimes steal on tiptoe, sometimes run through the house, as if fearing an enemy at every step, and even enter the eating-room with a start, a shrinking back, and a glowing quickness of look, which no previous experience of the friendly faces to be met there could correct or instruct.

Other proofs of his unsettled state of mind were more striking; sometimes, indeed, grotesque. Having sat down to his meal, he would eat as rapidly and as ravenously as when chance used to throw in his way a scrap of primitive food, during his lonely adventures among the hills, his eyes glancing suspiciously to either side at every mouthful. If wine was left too long near his hand, he would drink it till he became nearly intoxicated, and, in this changed and brave mood, mutter unintelligible soliloquies, which sounded like dignified threats against his foes, or smile vaguely, or laugh loudly, or sometimes start up, and attempt to say a Latin grace, or chant forth a Latin hymn, until mildly interrupted by Mr. Pendergast or Patrick, and thus recalled to his usual state of

caution. Connected discourse he scarcely ever attempted with his excellent friend, though often spoken to for the purpose. He never lost, however, the most profound respect for Mr. Pendergast, from the first day he found a refuge under his roof; but it must be added that the priest's style of evincing this sentiment was extravagant, nay, absurd, as were other features of his behaviour. For example; upon no occasion would he enter or leave the eating-apartment without slowly approaching his patron, his head bent, and his hands crossed on his breast, and then making him a low, humble, and formal reverence, such as he had been in the habit of tendering to his ecclesiastical superiors: once, indeed, while absolved in the contemplation of a difficult chapter of a grand theological work which had occupied him for years, and was likely to do so to the end of his life, he momentarily yielded to the delusion that Mr. Pendergast was the bishop of his old diocese, and likely to give him a benefice in reward for his literary labours.

A sudden noise in the house, or out of doors, and particularly the report of fire-arms, would go near to reduce him to his worst former state of helpless terror; and when thus excited, his

conduct and actions were enough to extort a smile from the most commiserating observer. It seemed his impulse to hurry, at once, from his book-lumbered room, in order to seek and claim the protection of his patron ; and as he fled with a shuffling step down the stairs, or along the passages, broken mutterings of ejaculation or prayer escaped him, and he wrung his hands, smote his thighs, or, if very much frightened, had a fashion of cracking the joints of his fingers, which, either from peculiar formation, or long practice, made a sharp audible sound at each twist he gave them. Then, it ought to be observed, that in about a year after his experience of the good living of Pendergast Hall, and his indulgence in sedentary and even slothful habits, Father James's tall and graceless figure became, in one part encumbered with flesh,—we mean about the region of the stomach and abdomen—his legs and thighs remaining as lank and as heavy as ever ; and hence, during any sudden fit of terror, such as has last been alluded to, the vivacity of his gesticulations borrowed additional grotesqueness from the peculiarities of his shape, loosely covered as that shape was by a very plainly-cut suit of clothes, in the ridiculous fashion of the time, and as old—(for he profess-

ed himself too modest, and too saving of his patron's purse, to accept a new suit)—as the first day of his entry into Clonmel, accompanied by Pendergast, Patrick, and Rory.

About the same hour at which Pendergast rode into the neighbouring city to make inquiries concerning the ruthless destroyer of his game, Father James issued through his favourite back-door to seek a well-known hiding-place in the grounds, in which to read his breviary. He gained the spot without molestation, although, from his glances over his shoulders, one would have thought some fearful pursuers near, and had gone through the half of his daily reading, when two shots, in quick succession, sounded very near to him, and something rattled among the leaves and branches over his head. To curb the impulse of his nervous fright was impossible. He sprang from his knees upon his feet, tossing his breviary high in the air, unconscious of the action; and with a shrill cry, ran through the surrounding bushes, he knew not or cared not in what direction. A few bounds and scrambles brought him into a space of clear ground, and he knocked himself, without seeing him, against the Mayor of Bull-ring, who stood there, leaning on his

gun, his spaniel panting and crouching at his feet, and his hideously-visaged bull-bitch silently displaying her tusks at his side.

“Ay?” cried John Gernon, coolly, though sternly, as if in answer to the priest’s thump against him; which, it may be noticed, did not make the low-built Hercules waver a hair’s breadth on his outspread bandy legs, while Father James was sent, by its rebound, staggering backwards;—“Ay, in troth! And whom have we here, this turn?”

The Priest gave no answer, but stood stuttering out the imperfect accents of fear, his protuberance much pushed forward, and his arms convulsively pulled backward; while John Gernon measured him with his cold, fierce eyes, and his bull-bitch continued to make her pursy black lips rise and fall over her set teeth.

“Be you the new king of birds and all game they have sent out to hinder *us*,” pointing to his protectress, “from shooting a han’ful of wild-fowl for the feast of the noble play of bull-bait, near at hand?” continued John.

Father James comprehended nothing of this second speech; but his staring eyes caught the motion of the speaker’s hand, as he pointed to the bull-bitch, and a quick and wild association

possessed his mind, as he screamed, “No, no ! not by such means !—no, for Christian mercy ! shoot at me again, but save me from the gnashing of her teeth !”

The Mayor of Bull-ring was puzzled. The priest’s dress gave no indication of his ecclesiastical character, and why he should be thus scared, and talk in such a strain of having himself put to death, seemed strange.

“In good earnest, who be you, master ?” he asked, advancing a step.

“You know—you know !” answered Father James, receding ; “And you are here, hot-foot after me, with that weapon in your hand, and that imp of blood at your heels, because you know !”

“And if I do, I was told it in my sleep, man,” resumed Gernon. “Hold, now ! stand ! we mean you no harm, by my mace and sword ! Down, Maud, down,” addressing the second object of the priest’s aversion, as, roused by his loud words of command to his companion, she prepared to spring ;—“There, she is quiet as an Easter lamb ; and now, master, tell me——”

“Nothing—nought—no word, unless you stand still !” interrupted Father James.

“Here, then, still as a stone, I stand, for

peace-sake ;—peace is best. But tell me, I say, are you of these parts ?”

“ No ! I give thanks to my God, no !”

“ Ay ? and why ? Where at present do you house ?

“ Yonder—there—under that noble roof,” pointing to Pendergast’s mansion, which peeped above the trees at some distance ; “ There—protected by the great owner of all these wide lands, and who says there is no present law to warrant you in hunting us down, or slaying us, or banishing us !” Pendergast had never mentioned to his poor inmate, indeed, the enactments which had been levelled against persons of his religion, and particularly against its ministers, since their first meeting.

“ Protected ? and hunting—and slaying—and banishing ?” muttered John Gernon ; “ now I begin to understand. Another concealed rebel ! ay, and better concealed than the rest : I heard not of his being alive before this day. The great, and the noble, and the wise Pendergast tells you truly,” he resumed, addressing the priest in a mild voice, for his own purposes. “ No ; be you Papist ten times over, or, for the matter o’ that, Popish priest——”

“ Priest !” again interrupted Father James ;
“ Man, man, who spoke of priests ?”

Gernon had made the allusion, still without suspecting that he parleyed with an ecclesiastic of the illegal form of worship, whatever might have been his other surmises ; but this ill-judged interruption put him on the true scent ; and another circumstance gave him almost proof of, in his estimation, an important and alarming fact. Simultaneously with his repetition of the word “ priest,” Father James vaguely remembered, for the first time since his escape from the well-screened retreat, that it was possible he might have dropped his breviary ; and, first feeling all his pockets, in an alarmed and hurried manner, his eyes strayed sideways towards the adjacent trees and bushes, and he timidly began to move from his place.

“ Maud ! watch that man !” cried Gernon, assured that the priest had lost something of which he ought not to allow him to repossess himself ; and the canine familiar accordingly made a plunge between Father James and the point he was in motion to gain, and looking up into his face, fixed upon him her baneful glare, and exhibited, more amply than ever, her dou-

ble rows of tusks and teeth. The ecclesiastic, returning her regards, though with a very different expression, became rooted to the spot. Gernon struck into the shade, and, after a short absence, again confronted his well-guarded prisoner. In his great horror of the bull-bitch, Father James once more forgot all about his breviary, and did not therefore look at Gernon to ascertain if he had got it in his hands. Subsequent reflection, however, hinted that the next words addressed to him by the Mayor of Bullring must have been grounded on a knowledge of who and what he was.

“ Good day, now, holy Sir,” said Gernon ; “ for I guess enough about you. Maud ! he may go his ways. Walk off to your grand house, I say, master——”

“ I will ; and I am thankful,” assented the priest, “ and the animal needs not to follow ?”

“ Not for the present : but look you, Sir.” He stepped after Father James, who, at the noise of his heavy tread, began to run. “ Stop ! a word more, I bid you !”

“ Any thing—any thing in peace—in peace and good-will between us—’tis a noble brute—and a good house-dog—and an excellent guard to its master, I warrant ;” endeavouring to look

smilingly and approvingly at the object of his praise.

“Be sure of that,” rejoined Gernon; “but listen. Go home to your fine house, and when you meet your friend, Miles Pendergast, you may as well not call to mind that you have met my handsome Maud on the grounds here.”

“Indeed, and in truth, I will not, Sir,” promised the priest, earnestly and sincerely.

“Nor her master either,” continued Gernon, still advancing, and fixing on him an expressive look.

“Assuredly no, genteel—and why should I?”

“Though, on second thought, you may as well,” pursued John Gernon—“Ay, do, do tell him all about it.”

“Even as it pleases you;” the priest did not fail to take a step backward for every one that Gernon took towards him, never allowing him within arm’s length.

“And you may add something to it,” resumed the Mayor of Bull-ring, striking the butt of his heavy fowling-piece against the ground, at which the priest jumped aside, and barely suppressed one of his usual cries, and the bull-bitch thought herself called upon to show fresh readiness for service: “Tell him from me——”

“Doubtless! of a certainty!” Gernon’s deep voice rose high, and Father James was anxious, out of time, to promise obedience to any thing.

“Tell him, that for young O’Burke’s sake—and for his own sake,—ay, and for *your* own sake——”

“I will, I will! by word and troth, I will!”

“Be silent, fool! and hear, first, what you are so over-anxious to engage for: keep your place, and listen, I say!—Husth!” A shot at some distance interrupted the speaker, and quite deprived the priest of self-command. At the risk of death in more than one frightful shape, he uttered the shrill cries he had just before scarcely controlled, and once more turned his back and fled.

But Gernon did not think proper to molest him farther. “No, Maud, you beauty!” he said, in his gentlest tones, to the loathsome animal, who waited but a signal to pursue the fugitive, and bring him back by the neck;—“No, dearee, he’s not worth the trouble: let us see what new-comer we are to have on our hands; and do you get to heel, Maud, to heel; and take no notice till I bid you.”

As he spoke, he looked down a narrow and faintly-traced path, which ran zig-zag into more

remote parts of the grounds, and saw a youth advancing towards him with a gun on his shoulder. It was Patrick O'Burke.

"Oh; oho! Paddy Papish is out a-sporting to-day, as well as ourselves, Maud," he continued: "that brave shot was his, pet; and if I don't greatly mistake, he heard that mad priest's screech too, and is mighty angry about it. Well, well; God help us, this time, at any rate, Maud."

Patrick's appearance gave cause for Gernon's suspicions. His brows were knitted, his eyes kindled, and his face red, as he came near; and he stepped to meet the intruder on his patron's grounds, haughtily and indignantly. Hitherto, he had not happened to have been with Rory Laherty upon any of the rencounters between the old gamekeeper and the Mayor of Bullring; nay, owing to Rory's caution of permitting his foster-son to become embroiled with the dangerous stranger, it was but that very morning Patrick had for the first time learned any thing of the matter.

"My service to you, Sir," he said, stepping a few paces from Gernon, who awaited his approach, resting on his piece, and whistling in a low cadence, as he looked in another direction.

“And mine to you, Sir,” he was answered.

“What injury have you done upon the gentleman who just parted from you?” continued Patrick.

“Gentleman?” repeated Gernon, measuring him with a deliberate glance from head to foot; —“I can’t tell who you mean by ‘gentleman,’ young master; but I do not care if you know that the mad creature who left my side, a moment ago, has undergone no injury from me.”

Patrick, recollecting the peculiarities of his poor tutor, and his aptness to cry out upon slight occasions, was reasonable enough, in his heated mood, to give credit to this answer. He soon found another subject for talking on, however.

“You came here to speak on business with Mr. Pendergast, friend?”

“No, friend.” Gernon continued his low whistle.

“With some of his establishment, then?”

“I know not any of them; and on that head wish to remain as wise as I am.”

“But our gamekeeper, Rory Laherty, is not quite unknown to you?”

“A passing acquaintanceship, merely.”

“Briefly; what do you here, Sir?”

“As briefly—who is it that asks?”

“The O’Burke, and on Mr. Pendergast’s

account: so, tell your errand now:—answer my question.”

“Perhaps—if you answer one of mine first.”

“Let me hear it:” Patrick also rested on his piece. “Where did your worship attend to hear lawful prayers the last Sabbath-day?”

“Impertinent fellow!” cried Patrick, haughtily.

“Impertinent? and fellow? Bother. Show me, and shortly too, that you went to church, last Sunday—ay, and the Sundays before it, for as many months as we can count, or pay me twelve-pence, current money of the realm, in satisfaction for every Sabbath-day’s worship you have missed; such being the fine by law established upon stayers-away from God’s service, and loose livers in this pious land.”

“You shall not tempt me, by your rudeness, fellow, to forget who I am, whoever *you* may be,” said Patrick: “but again I demand to know what is your business here?”

“Sport—not business,” answered Gernon.

“And, what kind of sport?”

“Such as fills—this,” continued Gernon, touching the already half-filled leathern bag which hung from his shoulders.

“With whose permission, friend?”

“Mine own,” replied Gernon, coolly filling a

small tin measure with brandy from a wicker-cased bottle which he drew out of his pocket :—
 “ ’Tis a hot day enough, for a September day : will you please to taste ? ” offering the measure.

“ I thank you, no : but it remains for me to tell you, that you must henceforth have Mr. Pendergast’s leave, as well as your own, to kill his birds, and other game, on these grounds.

“ Oh, not at all : see, for example ; ” he put his piece suddenly to his shoulder, as a small flock of wood-quests flew over his head, fired, and brought down two of the birds ;—“ Fetch me them, Maud, dearee,” he continued, and Maud flew to obey his command.

Patrick lost all patience at this imperturbable insolence. “ The ugly brute shall never take them off the grounds ! ” he cried.

“ To be sure, no—but I will for her,” said Gernon, pacing to meet the bitch.

“ Nor you, either, by heavens ! ” Patrick sprang before him, turned round and presented his piece.

“ Hollo ? ” questioned Gernon, staring at him.

“ Mind me, fellow,” rejoined Patrick ; “ your shot is gone, I have mine to the good, so take care what you attempt to do.”

“ Oh, brave ! brave ! ” exclaimed the other, scoffingly ; and the words were scarce spoken, when, flinging down his own piece, he jumped head-foremost upon Patrick, and with one twist of his arms possessed himself of his : “ Stop, now, Maud ! stop ! I don’t want your help this time ; only keep an eye on the lad, to hinder him and me from any more scuffling : ’tis a pretty sporting-piece,” curiously eyeing his prize ; “ and luck is in my road, this morning, to make my own of it.”

“ You are robber as well as poacher, then ? ” asked Patrick, whose wrath and courage united, though both of the most positive kind, did not prompt him to an immediate continuance of hostilities, under the circumstances.

“ It can hardly be called poaching,” answered Gernon, “ to provide a matter of a few dozen of birds for the good bull-feast to-morrow ; or robbery, to disarm a concealed Papist, under authority of the Act of Parliament of the last year, in that case made and provided.”

“ Put back the O’Burke’s gun in hand, and quit grounds ! ” here interrupted old Rory Laherty, suddenly arriving on the scene, close by the disputants : he was also armed.

“ Skirt him, beauty ! ” exclaimed Gernon, as,

with the rapidity and certainty of thought, he wheeled round upon Rory. The old man knew not what was doing, when he found himself without his piece, and at the same moment felt Maud tugging his ample skirts, in obedience to her master's orders.

"I must soon press a baggage wain in the King's service, at this rate," pursued Gernon, "to carry Papists' arms to the Royal stores, yon," pointing towards the town: "And now, steady, young O," to Patrick, who again seemed to meditate an attack,—“I will shoot you as I would shoot a Papish rabbit, if you budge an inch—as for your gamekeeper, (so called, but that's to be looked to, yet,) Maud can manage him.”

"Maybe not," said Patrick: then he addressed Rory in Irish; "Is he at hand?"

"Within a whistle," replied Rory: "and upon the wind."—"Brann! Brann!" cried Patrick; and Brann, our former acquaintance, now grown into the giant which Pendergast had predicted he would be, came galloping out of a near cover. The instant the animal saw how matters stood, his heavy ears, previously cocked, fell low, his eyes glared like live coals, his bristly coat grew rough, and he redoubled his

speed to join his friends. At the same moment, still another power appeared in view, in a contrary direction, namely, John Sharpe, his old musket resting on his arm, and his—(need it be said?)—inch-long pipe between his teeth.

“Look to yourself, Maud! a shot a-piece for the Papists, and look to yourself!” Thus Gernon expressed his arrangements for his changed position, holding a piece in either hand, and pointing one at Rory and the other at Patrick. And promptly taking his hint, Maud freed Rory’s skirts, and faced round to reconnoitre her more formidable enemy. “This is all fair,” continued Gernon; “all fair, and prime sport;” the fraptious tones of John Sharpe reached him from a distance, demanding, in his own idioms, the meaning of the scene before him, and bidding every human being, and the dogs too, be quite still until his closer approach; but after a hasty glance at him, Gernon proceeded as if he were not in existence. “I have heard tell of your Papish joyant of a dog, Master big O, and long wished to make him and my little beauty better friends; now they are like to be in for it: so, we have nothing to do but look on, and show them fair play—Wait for him, Maud! wait for him!” Brann yet

wanted about one hundred yards of the ground occupied by his adversary, who, even anticipating her master's advice, coolly though ferociously awaited his attack. John Sharpe, seeing his all-powerful commands made light of, redoubled his exhortations in the other direction, raised his voice to a cracked scream, presented his musket with the left arm, shook his right fist, and at last, in an effort to run forward, fell.

At this instant Brann came within a bound of Maud, and, perhaps in deference to the beauty's sex, suddenly stopped short. Feeling no such scruples with respect to him, she was fast in his throat, in requital for his gallantry, before he seemed well aware of her intent. At the first consciousness of assault, or of pain, the noble brute chucked his head backward and forward, but in vain; Maud held him firm. The great strength of his neck and shoulders was sufficient to raise her clear off the ground, and he often did so, but still to no purpose; and in a short time, self-exhausted by his own struggles, as much as he was enfeebled by loss of blood, and agitated by pain, he submitted for a moment to the advantage she had gained over him, lowering his head, so as to permit

her to tug hard, and uttering short and broken barks, while she did not suffer a sound to escape her.

“The bit will be out the next tug or so if he gives up that way,” observed Gernon; while Patrick and Rory looked on, utterly astonished and grieved at this inconceivable discomfiture of their boasted Irish stag-hound: “But stop; what’s in his head, now?” continued the Mayor of Bull-ring.

Of a sudden, Brann resumed his struggles to shake off his deadly foe. Then he jumped backward, and dragged her with him; her dangerous tugging being now ended, and her whole strength exerted to cling close, and keep her gripe. They went back many paces from the spot on which had commenced the fight, Maud still dragged or tossed at the will of her captive. “He wants to get her into the water, the born devil!” cried Gernon; and he had scarcely spoken, when Brann confirmed his surmise, by slipping into a small, but deep pool, which he had gradually approached, and forcing the bitch with him. They sunk; they quickly rose again; Brann now above Maud, but Maud’s tusks still in his throat, while the water grew tinted with his pure Milesian blood.

“ And now he wants to drown her !” continued Gernon, observing that, indeed, Brann, easily remaining uppermost in the new element, as well by virtue of his superior strength, as by his skill in swimming, struck Maud repeatedly with his heavy paws, and almost plunged his own nose under water, to keep her from breathing a mouthful of air. “ Well ! if the ould soul of cunning Papistry be not in the body of that Papish brute, my name’s not John Gernon ! Draw dogs, Master Patrick, draw dogs ! I consent to have it called a drawn-battle, till some other day. Help me, man, I say, or else the to-morrow’s bull may wear his garland home to his stall !” and so saying, he discharged both the loaded pieces which he had hitherto held in his hands, evidently as a precaution against an attack upon himself by their owners, Rory and Patrick ; and then, flinging them on the bank of the pool, jumped into the water. Patrick followed his example, more out of anxiety for Brann’s oozing wound, than for the life of Maud ; and both swam, or waded breast or knee high, according to the varying nature of the ground at the bottom of the pool, round their dogs. The bitch’s teeth were now easily disengaged from her adversary’s throat, for, in

fact, she was half drowned, and sense and muscular power began to decrease together. "Take him with you, to the mass, if you like, a' God's name ! and land him at your own side, there," exhorted Gernon, when they had parted the animals, and each seized his own by the neck. "I will tow Maud to the t'other side, and I can but say, Master Patrick, let him meet her again on some fit ground, where there are no back-doors, in the shape of puddled water, for Papish cowardice to be the better of, and then——"

"And then? and what then, ye limb o' the deevil?" interrupted John Sharpe; who, unobserved by Gernon or Patrick, had now gained the pool's edge, his wrath at its height, in consequence of his disgraceful fall. "So, Johnny Gernon, it is you—ah, you mother's blessing ! ah, you father's pride ! ah, you pet-bird !" all the while that Sharpe spoke these soft epithets, meant inversely from their apparent meaning, he grinned in his bitterest fashion,—“ Well might I give a guess til you, a langer step off; and so here you are, Johnny ?”

"Here I am," answered Gernon, not yet quite landed.

"Yes; ay, to be sure; and what good work have ye been at, ye sweet nut? (deevil crack

ye!) what put these twa sporting-pieces in your hands, forbye your ain, there?" John Sharpe took up the weapons, ere Gernon could prevent him; but he said,

"Leave them where you found them, old John; they are mine, by right of law."

"Leave them where I found them? maybe I will; and why not? Yours by right of law, dearee? what law, pet?"

"The good law that empowers all loyal subjects of the King to disarm all Papists, wherever and whenever they shall be found armed;" and short explanations from Patrick and Rory, farther supplied the land-steward with the necessary accounts of what had happened before he came up.

"Ay, to be sure!" he then continued;—"oh, doubtless; and all because the Mayor of Bull-ring says it; certain—ly! Here, Master Patrick! here, Gamekeeper!" he cried, suddenly flinging the pieces behind him, in such a direction that they could be promptly seized by their former proprietors, and they were so. "Prime and load!" he continued, presenting his own musket at Gernon; "ay, and slip in a ball each, if they are handy: my ain ould never-fail has ane a few inches aboon her breech,

already ; she has so, Johnny Gernon ; and now, mind an old soger ;” here he put his foot on Gernon’s piece, which lay on the ground since its master’s plunge into the pool ;—“ nathless that you are Mayor of Bull-ring, yon—where the horned deevil is, and hath taken up his abode by the side o’ your ain sel—as sure as he is in anither place, and at the side of his dearee of a mother ; and nathless that you are King of all Bachelors—ay, and called captain of figs’-ends, and tailors’ geese, and leather-parings, and wax-ends, Johnny—yet, Johnny, pet, ye will be moving from the place you stand, afore I bid ye twice over ; you, and that ugly brute at your knee,—ugly enough to make her ain bairns strike her,—troth, ye will, Johnny ! and have a care how ye come rieving and plundering to our grounds, again, honey, so ye will: troth, jest, now, Johnny.”

“ Sharpe, do you have a care what you are for doing,” said Gernon, in reply to this long exhortation : “ I tell you, quietly, over again, the arms are forfeit to the law, being illegally carried by concealed Papists ; and——”

“ To be sure,” interrupted John Sharpe ; “ only, who tould you, Johnny, that we are Papists here ?—and they are to be seized by all

loyal men; and who tould ye that you were such, dearee?"

"The lad will not deny his calling," answered Gernon.

"Wont he? how do you know, pet? And, supposing he doesn't, how does *he* know what is his calling? Does he know, this moment, if he ever had so much as a father? Tell me that;" Patrick did not feel complimented, although, in his own way, John Sharpe meant him well.

"As to *my* loyalty, old Sharpe, you shall get some proof of it, yourself, maybe," resumed Gernon.

"And may be so; why not? well to get any thing, these times: or, if not, obliged til you, Johnny, all the same, ye ken; only, now your absence would be good company; and there's the second time I tould ye so; troth, jest."

"The law has a word to say to fosterers of Papists, as well as to Papists themselves," retorted Gernon, stooping as if to wind round his wrist the cord by which he held his bitch secured: Patrick held Brann also in a leash—"Give me my own piece!" he cried, suddenly springing towards it: his foot slipped.

"Back, mon!" roared John Sharpe; "back, first, and forward, after; or, by the pipe between

my teeth, I'll shoot you as dead as your great-grandfather—a body ye seldom heard o', I reckon!—Cover him!" he continued, addressing Patrick and Rory, of whom the latter only stood with a loaded piece; Patrick had disdained to arm himself in such a contest. "Never mistak' me, Johnny; I ken what I am about as well as ye can tell me: here am I, land-steward, and under orders from his honour, my master, as also is the gamekeeper at my back, to keep you, and such as you, from trespass upon our grounds; and because ye have trespassed, over and again, 'tis *your* piece is the forfeit to us, mon; and because it is a forfeit, we'll keep it, as sure as gunsmith made it: and so, for the thard time, jest march, dearee—no disgrace to ye to retreat before odds, ye ken, wherefore ne'er look shamefaced about it—only march, march, pet, nathless."

With a baffled grin Gernon had been gradually moving along the main path towards a private entrance into the grounds, and now he walked on briskly, after glancing one look upon Sharpe, and saying, "'Tis a long lane has no turning, ould acquaintance."

Seeing that Patrick remained behind inactive, while Sharpe and Rory followed him with pre-

sented piece,—“Another day for the dogs, Master big O !” he shouted.

“As you will,” answered Patrick ; “any day ; to-morrow, if you please, after the bull-bait.”

“No, not to-morrow ; nor would I advise you or your Irish jayant to come to our bull-bait, young Sir ;” and he turned out of sight.

“Gi’ us a hand, lad,” said John Sharpe, returning after he had seen the intruder out of the grounds ; “Papist or no Papist, we know you ower long til stand by and see you wronged by a bull-knecked scapegrace like yon.”

“I thank you, John.” Patrick wrung the old man’s hands, while tears, more bitter than sweet, filled his eyes. And thus is given, as was promised, the circumstances which produced John’s second and most positive declaration of friendship towards Patrick O’Burke ; and as Mr. Pendergast had not yet returned from the city, it is thus also explained how that gentleman’s proposed caution of John Gernon was rendered unavailing. When he did come home, and was made acquainted with the fresh broil between him and his young friend and dependents, Pendergast exerted all his powers of persuasion to keep Patrick from future rencounters

with the city bully ; and now, as was farther premised, he was doomed to be disregarded ; for in his heart, in consequence of Gernon's parting threat, Patrick had said, " To the bull-bait to-morrow I will go ;" and he was sufficiently obstinate, if not ungrateful, to hold by his resolution.

CHAPTER X.

AT an early hour next morning, the neighbouring city gave abundant indications of the public sport and festivity which were expected to take place within its walls. Its inhabitants, of the middle and lower classes, appeared in their holiday clothes, standing at their shop doors, or outside their stalls, or grouped in the streets, all discussing gleeishly the one engrossing topic. Amongst them might be seen the owners of the dogs destined to death or glory in the bull-ring, each with his important animal in leash, lest he might waste his strength in skirmishing with a rival, or encounter injury by being permitted to roam at large. Of these persons many were butchers, or butchers' boys; and they generally kept up the most esteemed breed of dogs, and had them always in readiness for combat, because, the year round, they ex-

exercised the ferocious habits of the animals by making them guardians of their shambles, otherwise much exposed and unprotected, and moreover, could afford to feed them on the diet best calculated to excite their courage and spirit. But the competition for bull-baiting fame was not confined to the city. From the suburbs, and even from remote hamlets and villages, young farmers, or young peasants, led in their fierce watch-dogs, to try their chance in the ring, under the eye of the Mayor and his critical judges. These latter-mentioned canine warriors were not highly prized, however, as they seldom had in their veins the true blood for the sport, being either mastiffs, or half-mastiff and half bull-dog, or else quite degraded by a descent from the Milesian family of Brann. It is not meant by this that they lacked courage or strength in attacking the bull, or evinced more care of their limbs and lives than did their superior brethren : a want of method was the chief crime laid to their charge ; connoisseurs said they did not “ fight fair ; ” which, perhaps, meant, after all, little more than that they did not display precisely the same tactics as those practised by the peculiar breed of animal which was arbitrarily said to be best fitted by nature

for the perilous game in question. Such as the rustic candidates for distinction were, however, they invaded the streets of the city in great numbers, they and their masters and seconders, male and female, adding considerably to the noise and bustle of the holiday scene; while bells jingled in the church steeple, boys and children shouted, and the venerable bellman of the guild went his rounds, proclaiming in an authoritative though quavering voice, orders issued by the civic powers for the maintaining good order; the passive man submitting without a murmur to the gibes and laughter of his own particular crowd of tiny persecutors, who accompanied him wherever he moved, and from the cock of his old hat, down to the tarnished buckles of his square-toed shoes, omitted nothing worthy of their satire.

At about ten o'clock, the place allotted for the day's sport began to be occupied.

In the middle of the town, at the widest end of the widest street, stood the Market-cross. This was a piece of solid mason-work, shaped according to its name, some twenty feet high, and having a substantial pedestal. As may be concluded, it was the work of more Catholic times, and it had been invented for purposes of

business and piety, conjointly. During public processions of the clergy and the people, such as were made at Pentecost, mass used to be celebrated before it; and thus, considered together with the great event of which it was a symbol, and the rude sculpturings of saints and angels inflicted on its front, the Market-cross served to create devout associations in the minds of the people. Its character so far established, it then asserted its influence over their traffic. In remote and loosely-organized times, the buyer in the market which used to assemble in the open space around it, had commonly to apprehend that the article he wished to purchase either was of a bad quality, contrived to look well, or had been stolen by the vender; hence arose a necessity for his receiving some solemn voucher of the goodness of the commodity, or of its having been honestly come by: and in the absence of other forms, or of the means of obtaining them, he was satisfied if the suspected seller stepped up to the cross, and uncovering his head, and laying his hand upon it, swore to the facts required.

Such had been the ancient sway of the Market-cross now pointed out to notice: but the growth of wholesome laws and arrangements to regulate buying and selling, as well as the

change in religion, had, long before the day of the bull-bait which many are about to witness, quite deprived it of its primitive vocation. Excessive zeal had even shattered it, here and there, for the purpose of exterminating the ugly visages of holy men, and the bloated cheeks and goose-wings of the little celestials which were chiselled, very barbarously, as has been hinted, upon part of its surface. And, in fact, the sole, or most important service at present required of the Market-cross, was, that it should securely hold the great iron-ring, which was to hold the rope, which was to hold the bull destined to be baited for the amusement of a more enlightened generation.

The space round what we may now call the bull-stake, was rudely barricaded at every side; and, at two sides, very near to the shop-doors and stalls of the street, which were shut up, or otherwise secured, to keep off the pressure of the throng. Behind the barrier, where it crossed the street, and confronted the stake, rough seats of unplained planks had been constructed, rising one above the other, for the accommodation of such persons of condition as could not obtain places in the windows of the houses, at either hand. Immediately under the front row of

these seats, was a small enclosure, within the great one, where sat an official person, with a book on his knee, and a pen and ink in his hand. It was his business to write down, before the commencement of the sport, the names of all persons who proposed to set their dogs against the bull, which process he called "entering the dogs;" and he was bound to close his book a full hour clear of the time for slipping the first dog, in order to limit the number of aspirants for fame, preserve order, and ascertain who failed and who succeeded during the hurry and interest of the game. After he declined to inscribe a name on his important page, no man could, that day, present himself for a chance of glory.

In the angle of the barrier, to the right of this seat of office, arose the throne of the Mayor of Bull-ring, with lower places for his two sheriffs, and standing room for his inferior attendants; a second small enclosure of stakes and boards being thrown up around all, to guard against possible dangers from the bull breaking his rope, or pulling the ring out of the Market-cross, or, perhaps, pulling down the cross itself.

It has been said that, about ten o'clock, this scene of the approaching entertainment began

to be filled. Already, indeed, the lowest of the populace were crushing each other almost to death outside the great barriers, and the windows of the houses of the street, from the first-floors to the attics and sky-lights, as well as the tops of such as happened to have parapets, became alive with more respectable spectators. The rising seats, over the secretary's enclosure—for secretary we now call the man with the book—were not, however, as yet so much thronged, for the reason that men, appointed for the purpose, kept them only for such genteel visitors as might come in a hurry, and be willing to pay a handsome price for admission.

The secretary's work was nearly done; one by one, the last of the candidates who were ready to present themselves within the allotted time, jumped over the palings of the larger barrier, followed by their dogs, and ushered forward, and, indeed, permitted to make their jump, by two officials, with ornamented staves in hand; and one by one they were introduced, at another spring, to the solemn office of the registry; and after having paid him a small fee, and seen him make some marks in his book, which they believed to be the letters of their names, one by one they vaulted back again, and

took their standing-places, as best they might, amongst the rabble, outside the bull-ring.

But, neither the bull, nor the Mayor of Bull-ring, had yet appeared, and many anxious eyes looked out for their approach. A stir, and loud voices down the street, in the direction whence the latter-mentioned individual was expected to come, in procession, to his throne, seemed at last to promise that popular impatience and curiosity were about to be gratified. The jesting, jibing, and loud laughter and exclamation which had previously arisen from the crowd subsided into silence, or into whisperings, and the glances of all turned to the tiers of seats above the secretary's stool; for, by a narrow private passage, which flanked those seats, it was known that the master of the sports would enter the ring to gain his place of dignity.

Few eyes could penetrate down the street; but the bustle drew nearer; and presently, instead of the Mayor and his state emerging from the private passage, the fat proprietor of the head inn suddenly appeared on the highest and most remote of the seats, his head bare, and puffing and blowing from unusual exertion, while he said in a loud though hoarse voice—

“Genteels! neighbours, and all good lads!

here be a great man, from foreign parts, and along with him two ladies of his family, who having just put up at the King's Arms (a proof of his loyalty and fair intentions), and heard of the noble sport about to be proceeded in, are in need of a convenient place for the day; wherefore I, Kit Holmes, crave for him and his fair dames, in the name of courtesy and hospitality, and in my own name, and in the name of the King's Arms, that you accommodate him with one upon the moment; and well I know, the best you have, he shall have,—ay, your best of the best—your place of honour for the strangers!”

The professional zeal mixed up with this speech did not escape the keen perceptions of the crowd, and “Bravo, Kit!” was loudly shouted in mockery of the innkeeper, at the same time that no delay occurred, particularly among the more respectable people already in possession of some of the important rough planks, in answering his eloquent appeal. A party who sat in the very front row, directly over the Secretary's box, immediately arose, and vacated their places in favour of Kit Holmes's “great man from foreign parts, and the two ladies of his family:” and so soon as Kit had paid

gracious thanks for what he chose to monopolize as a personal compliment, he turned his back upon the ring, and bowed profoundly to some one under him, who, it would seem, stood in the street. The next moment the trio, in whose cause he had been so energetic, appeared before the curious multitude.

First came, springing from plank to plank, a gentleman, certainly of some consideration, tall and well made, and answering, in his attire, to the innkeeper's promise of his being "from foreign parts:" of his features, the people could scarcely judge, as his low-flapping hat, and the standing collar of his travelling-cloak, were arranged so as almost wholly to disguise them. When he had about half ascended the seats, he paused, turned round, and extended his arm and hand; and promptly responding to his offer of service, a comely young lady, of eighteen or nineteen, also wearing a dress different from the fashions at present around her, bounded up the plank as spiritedly as he had done, though more gracefully, took his hand first and next his arm, and then both faced the audience, and smiling and laughing, as they spoke to each other in strange language, continued their way, ushered by Kit Holmes, down to the place of

honour which had been prepared for them. Before they stepped into it, however, they stopped short, looked behind them, and the young lady raised one of her fingers in earnest appeal to her companion, upon which he assisted her hastily into her seat, and then hurried back the way he had come. The spectators, anxiously watching for his re-appearance, saw him, in a few minutes, leading by the hand another lady, very young, very low and slight, but of a childish-reserved deportment, habited in attire of a grave colour, and having a decidedly foreign face, of which the tint was dark, the nose long and somewhat hooked, the lips liny, though well-formed, the forehead strikingly high, and the eyes deep black, round, observant, indeed, almost restless. She did not spring forward as her friend had done, but stepped firmly and, it seemed, haughtily ; nor did she laugh or smile, nor cling close to her guide, but barely touching his hand, suffered him to lead her. Once or twice he stooped his head and whispered something to her, which, from his manner, seemed meant for her amusement ; but no pleasant lines played about her mouth, and she only looked up at him with eyes full of serious if not impassioned meaning.

They gained their seats. The good-humoured young lady rose to receive her friend, and it seemed by her intentness as she spoke, by her conciliating smiles, and by her pointing backward, that perhaps she made excuses for having left her grave companion behind. But if such was the case, her amiable apologies did not appear to be received in the spirit in which they were offered ; for the person whom she addressed only bowed with an air half humble, half offended, and sighing deeply, then awaited her time to sit down ; that is, remained standing till her fair companion had become seated.

When all had settled themselves in their places, the gentleman dividing the two ladies, they could not long remain unaware that they attracted the full attention of the crowd assembled around them : in fact, every eye was fixed upon the strangers, and they must have even overheard some of the many conjectures as to who and what they were, as well as remarks upon their attire, persons, and features, which rather freely escaped the common people who stood without the barriers ; and the three young visitors bore this by no means pleasant notoriety each in a different way. The gentleman turned sideways, his hat and cloak-collar

now completely hiding his face, leaned his elbow on the edge of the enclosure, in contact with which he sat, and spoke in a low tone, now to one lady, now to the other. His black-eyed charge, when she first observed the stare of the crowd, drew a thick veil over her face, and afterwards shifted her position, in evident impatience; but her contrast—for contrast she was, being of a good height, and of a full, almost a jolly figure; and having fair skin and fair hair, blue eyes, a straight nose, nearly meriting to be called short, and just redeemed from a turn-up; a little narrow mouth, but the lips so rich, that when they closed, which was seldom, they almost made a circle; a round, large chin, which promised to be double not long after she should become a matron; and round cheeks, really rose-red, and deeply-dimpled; this happy-looking creature took the admiration of the good people in a very different spirit. She, also, had a veil, but instead of lowering it, she put it quite up, throwing it gracefully, though a little daringly, over her head-dress, and then she sent her laughing, satirical blue eyes over the whole assembly, at first as gravely as she could, but finally allowing them to dance, and glitter, and half close in smiles, while with per-

fect self-command, and perhaps some contempt, she seemed to select for critical remark to her companions individuals of the motley throng.

This did not escape the notice of the causers of her mirth ; and in consequence, although upon her first brilliant appearance among them she had the effect of a suddenly-unclouded sky of a dull day, they began to take umbrage, and to vote her bearing and conduct audacious, vulgar, unfeminine. The passionate ill-humour of the lesser lady had already offended them. And in the manner of the gentleman, also, they thought they saw additional grounds for being angry ; for, though he still contrived to conceal his face, it seemed, that whenever his laughing companion turned to convey to his ear the result of a new observation, he stooped his head to laugh with her, and thus encouraged her in making little of the company around her : an ungrateful return, to say the least, for the ready politeness shown to the new-comers.

The grave or scowling faces of the assembly soon evinced the feelings which began to rise in their breasts, and which they now encouraged by communicating to each other. Presently they found words to retort upon their provoking critic and her party, the glances and dumb-

show with which she vexed them. “Trollops, —not ladies!” cried some. “No gentleman, wherever he comes from!” said others. “Randall Oge O’Hagan, with two of his mesdamoiselles, maybe, come in disguise among honest people, to see who is best worth overtaking on the road home!” proclaimed a country-looking man. He pronounced, in this accusation, the name of a notorious freebooter, one of the captains or chiefs, as was supposed, of the Rapparee bands, who had aided King James in the late Civil war, and who, after the termination of hostilities, continued to exist, as common highwaymen, in the otherwise peaceful country of Ireland. And Randall Oge O’Hagan was so celebrated, if not admired, for his masquerading talents upon many occasions, that this hint took well, and was caught up and re-echoed by the crowd, bitterly, and with various modifications. The speaker himself drew some of the attention of his audience. He stood close outside the barrier, wearing, as has been indicated, a peasant’s dress, and obviously a candidate for the honour of slipping at the bull a large mastiff, whose nose peeped over the planks at his master’s side; and so far there was nothing remarkable in the man. His great stature, however,

rising above the heads of the throng behind him, and at either hand, as he sturdily folded his arms across his breast, became the admiration of many ; and the women of the mob praised his handsome face ; for, notwithstanding its certain expression of daringness, it was composed of a fine, open, tranquil forehead, a Roman nose, smiling eyes and mouth, and a beautiful projecting chin, all of the largest order.

The people were not sure that the strangers understood the language in which these reproaches had been addressed to them, and, indeed, their subsequent conduct seemed to prove that they did not. For in nothing did they evince an improved sense of respect for their company, or a consciousness of having been uncivilly or insultingly accosted ; and the cries of the assembly now assumed a menacing tone, many voices calling out to have the intruders dragged back from the conspicuous and honourable place they were thought unworthy to occupy, when a new event riveted the attention and interest of the more clamorous, and for the present saved—our friends.

CHAPTER XI.

THE clock in the steeple of the market-house, which towered almost over his head, struck eleven upon the glad ears of the man of the book, proclaiming the hour at which he was free to shut his registry, and decline to enter the names of any more candidates for the day's sport. Accordingly, he closed the ponderous volume, with a clap that startled his admiring spectators, and in a loud voice commanded some of the servants of the ring to lead the bull from his adjacent stall, and bind him to his stake, the battered and humiliated market-cross.

These proceedings, of themselves, diverted the wrath of the people from their imperturbable tormenters, and even produced some slight decorum in the critical young lady and her party: but it is to what followed we would invite passing attention.

A struggle took place at that point of the barrier over which the proprietors of the assembled dogs had jumped to approach the secretary. It was evident that the two stout officials there posted endeavoured to prevent some late aspirants from passing into the ring: voices rose high in altercation, and the guardians of good-order flourished their staves, and used their hands to push back the pertinacious claimant. But, after much wrangling, at a favourable opportunity, he cleared the nearly breast-high inclosure at a bound, and stood within the prohibited arena.

“The most Christian and properest-looking man I have seen, as yet,” said the watchful young lady to her companions, speaking French.

“Ay?” whispered her male friend, half turning round to confront this praised person; but checking himself, “You know, my dear, I must still hide my face from them all, as long and as well as I can; but describe your knight, mad-cap.”

“Tall, and about twenty-five; well-contrived in the limbs; well enough in feature for a man; a smart, though somewhat rustic cap, set loosely on his head, a green riding-coat to his back, but-

toned tight, as who should say he had not a figure to show, a sword at his side, spurs at his heel, a whip in his hand, ruffles at his wrist, and the sauciness of Lucifer in swaddling-bands on his face, now that he has made that wonderful jump and cleared those plebeian grooms."

"Good, for a sketch;—now tell me what else *he* is good for, or may be?"

"Hark, and know!—*There* was a fairy-blast, wound on the silver whistle slung round his neck!"

"To what purpose?"

"Oh, that you could see!—it has summoned, and brought to his knee, over the shoulders and heads of all opposers, a monster, of I know not what race, but I suppose we must call it dog, upon this dog-day, as big as a Kerry cow, and, heaven save us! looking as fierce as a royal tiger."

"And how many have both eaten up, as yet?"

"You must wait a while to learn, if I am to be your instructress—the scene grows too good to look at and tell of in a breath; only have patience, however, and I shall faithfully copy it for your idleness."

While the lively lady takes her own time to represent things as she pleases, other spectators shall not be kept waiting. Patrick O'Burke stood patting Brann's head, and scowling defiance at her and his temporary enemies. The guardians of the barrier advance hostilely to him, and commanded him to repass the bounds he had broken with his dog.

"That I will never do, masters," replied Patrick, now smiling contemptuously, and speaking with assumed carelessness—"I am here to have my name, or rather my little dog's name, entered in your book for a tilt at the bull, and my business must be done—where is the man to speed it?"

The sturdy officials pointed to the secretary, enclosed within his proper palings; but added that the hour was past, and that it would be useless to apply to him.

"We shall see," said Patrick, and with only a slight exertion of strength and skill, he alighted close at the secretary's side, impetuously followed by Brann, who, in making her own bound, struck the solemn officer with one of her paws, and somewhat disturbed the dignity of his position on his three-legged stool.

“*Ma graw gal gorçoon* he war!” shouted the always agitated voice of the unseen Rory Laherty, from the outskirts of the crowd.

“Never a better!” echoed the rather more visible John Sharpe, whose cross-grained face just peered in a mixture of convulsions, (from great pressure, treading on his toes, wrath against all around him, and approbation of his newly-elected protégé,) between the scraggy neck of a tall old woman and the shoulders of a gigantic man—“Never a better,—lad! til him, til him!—hu, ugh!”

But neither his own courage and address, nor the aid of these exhortations, enabled Patrick to gain his point with the precise secretary. The hour had struck, “and not even prince or king, ay, or the great Pope of Rome himself, with all his bulls,”—this he added sneeringly—“should enter a dog that day in the entering book.”

“But you mean not to say, good fellow, that my dog shall not take her turn at your bull, if he and I fancy it?” questioned Patrick.

Yes; the obdurate secretary meant exactly that, and nothing else; nay, he meant more than that—he meant that Patrick should quit the ring forthwith, and take his stand among

the good people outside its limits, as the bull would immediately be led to his stake, and the Mayor immediately follow, and time could not be spared for idle altercation.

“No, no, friend,” said Patrick, “I do not think it is in my mind to undergo, anew, a squeezing such as I have just escaped from; but since you will not oblige me in the slight matter I have demanded of you, you cannot surely make objection that I stand here, at your side, to witness the coming sport?”

Strong and loud objections, however, the officer did make; and when Patrick repeatedly declared that he would not move from his present comfortable place, he angrily commanded the two keepers of the barrier, who all this time stood near, and as many more hands as were willing, to force “the spawn of the old Papist” out of the ring.

“Hear you that?” whispered the observant young lady so often spoken of to her male companion: it will be remembered, that the remarkable strangers sat in the front and lowest row of the tiers of planks, and were divided from the secretary’s enclosure only by stakes and boards.

“If I am removed, good fellow,” remon-

strated Patrick, drawing his light sword, "it must only be after this bright steel passes through the churl bodies of more than one who shall dare to lay hands upon me:—and look you," pointing to Brann, who began to growl and pace round her master, "this Papish hound is to be removed too."

The voice of the secretary rose higher; he appealed to the assembly against these blood-thirsty threats of one who drew upon peaceable and loyal people a sword which he was not entitled to wear at his hip, and many of the lower orders, particularly those who, like Patrick, had come too late to be "entered," but who, like him, durst not venture to insist on opposing the laws of the Bull-ring, answered the appeal by hissing, hooting, and crying out to have the "saucy Papish cur" flung headlong to them, that they might award him his merits. At the same time, three or four of the most violent of the mob prepared to clear the barrier and reinforce the installed guardians of good order, and it seemed, indeed, that matters were to proceed to extremity.

"Can we do nothing to assist the Papist lad?" again demanded the young lady of the

gentleman at her side ; and thereupon they began to whisper earnestly together.

“ Hold, fellows,” cried Patrick, seizing Brann’s bristling neck ere the foremost of his foes closed upon him : “ I wish to avoid all real violence if possible, and therefore let us strike a parley : provide me a seat here, at my back, and I will quietly leave your ring.”

But when inquiring glances were directed to the seats he spoke of, no place appeared vacant, all having been occupied within the last half-hour.

“ By well-managed packing and contriving, it may be done, however,” resumed the young lady, still speaking to her protector ; and while she spoke, she and both her friends moved close together.

“ Quit, quit !” roared Patrick’s opponents, “ there is no room for you among the gentlefolks ; quit !—and take your stand with your betters outside the ring.”

“ Turn,” said a low, sweet voice, almost at Patrick’s ear ; and when he obeyed the command, his eyes encountered those of his new friend, as she pointed to a scanty seat by her own side. Surprise and, indeed, admiration,

kept him silent for a moment,—and motionless too, except that with much respect and ceremony he raised his hand to his cap, and stood uncovered and bowing before her.

“Haste, if indeed you are in earnest disposed to save us a broil,” she resumed, speaking briskly, while she turned her eyes and head away—“haste, and treasure up your politeness for another time, and for some other person; doubtless ’tis not too much to carry about with you?”

“Madam—” Patrick began to mumble.

“Jump, Sir! we have seen that you can do that at the least—jump! and let us rest in peace and quietness.”

And, thus exhorted, Patrick did jump, and so did Brann, uninvited, and in a few seconds was settled, to his great surprise and delight, by the side of his despotic patroness, his huge hound trying to crush himself down at his feet.

The conduct, during this scene, of the tall and handsome countryman who had accused Patrick’s protectress of being at present seated under the guardianship of the far-famed Rapparee Randall Oge O’Hagan, is worthy of notice. He stood at that point of the barrier

around which clustered the most zealous seconds of decorum, some of whom eventually entered the ring to support the men with the staves. In the beginning of the tumult, no voice arose louder than his in exhortations to punish the unbefriended Papist ; and when those near him prepared to scramble over the enclosure, still he was earnest in encouraging them. And yet one or two shrewd and comparatively quiet spectators, who watched his manner and proceedings, felt half-disposed to believe that much of this show of energy was of a doubtful character. A smile seemed to lurk in the corners of his mouth at the moment that his words breathed the most uncompromising wrath in echo to the outcries around him ; nay, the tones of his voice might be supposed to hide, in their very loudness, a mockery of the factious spirit which he caught up and repeated. It was suspected too, although he readily volunteered to assist the reinforcement against Patrick in struggling through the dense crowd and passing the barrier, and although he even appeared to exert his great strength for the purpose, that he contrived to impede rather than accelerate their progress, in something of the way in which one, while playing with a child, will pretend to

lend the urchin a hand to enable it to stand on its legs and run away, at the very time that one sily manages to keep it rolling about on the floor. But more interesting persons must be attended to.

“Now, at the least, Madam,” resumed Patrick, after he occupied his rather scanty seat, “you will permit me to express my gratitude for your timely courtesy shown in my favour.”

“No; and for a good reason, because there has been no courtesy shown in your favour,” the lady answered him, while her eyes were fixed on the people straight before her at the other side of the ring.

“In my poor Brann’s favour, then?” questioned Patrick, ironically and half-offended.

“No, again; for fear of the old saying, Favour me, favour my dog.”

“In whose, then? for assuredly here are but Brann and myself to contest the honour, unless that, without our knowledge, we are each two dogs and two men;—in whose favour then, Madam?”

“I have as much as answered your question beforehand:—in favour of my friends and myself, and of all peaceable people here, who have not come to see an Irish, or rather a mongrel

Irish, bull-ring changed into a gladiator's circus."

"Well, Madam, I must be grateful to Heaven, then, if not to you, for any chance which has gained me the happi—I mean the honour, I now enjoy."

Patrick withdrew the familiar word he was about to utter, because he saw a slight cloud begin to gather on the young lady's sunny brow.

"To Heaven, and to your guardian angel and patron saint, like a good Papist," she added.

"Good, or bad, or indifferent," he replied, again hurt, and allowing it to appear that he was, "I will not believe that I have been generously rescued from the common insult of the mob around us, to be——"

"Twitted with Papistry here? Well; and you need not fully believe it, unless you are very much of a mind to do so, and furthermore determined to wage war, as best you can, against every creature you speak with."

"On the knees of my Papist heart, then, Madam, I crave pardon for my unworthy doubt; particularly as your last words embolden me to think, though upon indirect grounds, that I have a right to thank you for something, after all."

“ For nothing under the blessed sun ; and yet try your genius anew at the game of seeing things out of sight.”

“ Thus, then, under your permission. Since I have not obtained entrance to this honourable seat that I might hear my religion cast into my teeth as a disgrace and a by-word, surely it was at least pity for the unseconded Catholic that suggested the freeing him of the taunts, and perhaps worse, of the crowd without—and even for pity I *will* be grateful—I, who so seldom find it.”

“ Still, I would counsel you, Sir, not to be at the trouble, though perhaps there was a little of what you speak about in the matter, and who could help it ? A unit of an unfledged Papist flourishing his bauble sword against yonder host of bold and brave loyalists ! We deemed you an escaped bedlamite, here ; or supposing your wits about you, wondered that you did not go on your knees, and cry *miserecorde*, from sheer instinct.”

“ Again supposing the instinct.”

“ To be sure ; and why should it not be supposed ? They know it is in you, and in all of your tribe ; and ye are *what* ye are because of that knowledge—second-hand men, and your wives

and daughters helots of helots; things are ye, made only to be fined, imprisoned, disarmed,—(how come you by that plaything at your hip? think you to wear it long, after to-day?)—disarmed, disinherited, whipped to church by the beadle, or threatened with the loss of double your fortunes—twelve pence each,—and voted unworthy of loyal housewives, loyal mistresses,—(you rode hither to-day, did you?) sparrow-shooting, governorship of rabbit-warrens, and town bell-ringing.”

“ I did not indeed know—” Patrick began, but she interrupted him.

“ Look again at the men in whose presence you have dared to think yourself a man, and thank God that you now breathe to feel a true repentance,—note the inborn superiority that sits upon their foreheads, and flashes from their noble eyes. See in particular the grand being just opposite to us, whose head, wedged in between two others, is gracefully covered with a red and blue night-cap,—and was it to his beard, and to the beards of such as he, you presumed to offer defiance?—beard, I may say, for owing, doubtless, to the lofty pursuits of the week, (he will turn out to be the free, high-caste butcher of your city, I reckon)—it has thriven on his

chin since the last Saturday at night to this present Saturday morning:—before him, and such as him, you bared your little sword, did you? and deemed yourself worthy of slipping your Papish hound at an orthodox lord of the meadows? (Heaven keep you, pray I, from the thought of whispering your bristly monster over these palings and planks, by and by, in despite of them all !”)

Patrick did not well know what to think of this rapidly-spoken tirade. The previous simplicity of his life left him almost ignorant of the worldly mode of hiding a meaning under a play of words; and whether the lady ridiculed him, or his late opponents, he could not exactly divine. He was, however, more disposed than otherwise to decide in his own favour, and, at all events, he felt amused at her remarks, and once or twice had nearly laughed out.

After his timely escape from the secretary's box, those who had been pressing upon him, sulkily retired, at the prudent recommendation of the most important person yet arrived upon the scene, and left him to enjoy his seat in comparative peace. The ill-humour of the crowd still continued, however, against him, and when they had time to observe how he had disposed

of himself, it began to return in full force against his chance protectors also, and blending into one great current, this double flow of disapprobation soon became re-directed towards the place occupied by the strangers. During the lady's late discourse with Patrick, she resumed her good-humoured but mocking notice of the people, as may have been concluded from one of her illustrations, and the uproar against the unpopular visitors grew louder and more hostile than ever.

Perhaps because he observed this, "the great man from foreign parts," who, since Patrick's coming, had been turned almost with his back to him and his fair lecturer, his face completely hidden from the youth's notice, and seemingly absorbed in conversation with the dark-cheeked girl, moved himself slowly round, and made a sign for his second young charge to attend to something he had to say. She inclined her head accordingly. Patrick's eye involuntarily fixed on the reserved gentleman of the party which protected him, and who, to his great surprise previously felt, had not yet honoured him with a salute. The moment he looked, that person, evidently after glancing, for the first time, at him, was in the act of starting on his seat in a

remarkable manner, but had withdrawn his features from possible observation; then there ensued between him and his more communicative companion whisperings more earnest than those with which their secret parlance had commenced, and Patrick detected the young lady looking askance at himself, seemingly in much interest. In a moment afterwards her cloaked friend again turned away, and she sat upright in her place, with unusual gravity of deportment, but with a new and lively interest still playing through her speaking features.

She did not hasten, however, to resume any conversation with Patrick, and he was studying what question to ask her, when loud shouts outside the ring fixed the attention of all, and even of those of the crowd who had been so angry against him and his satirical protectress. The people present caught up the shout, and the bull was ushered to his stake, gaining it by a passage, left open for him, to the base of the market-cross, from a neighbouring alley of the town. The animal was blindfolded when he entered the ring, a cloth being thrown over his head, as well, perhaps, to disguise its ornaments, until the fitting time, from public gaze, as to hinder him from being scared and rendered prema-

turely ill-tempered during his progress from his stall. But so soon as the cable, ingeniously and firmly affixed to his hind-legs, had been secured in the iron ring of the market-cross, his conductors whisked off with an air of triumph his envious veil, and at the sight of his garlanded front and gilt horns, if not at the grand glare of his courageous eyes, another great shout arose from the spectators.

“Noble creature!” said Patrick, willing to be heard by the lady at his side; “how astonished and how inquiringly he looks at the unexpected scene around him, as yet unsuspecting of the many foes he is led hither to encounter—though, there now! as the more currish dogs begin to bark and jump up to get a view of him outside the palings, he begins to have a misgiving, and to prepare for the fight.”

No answer was returned to this speech; and Patrick continued,—“I do fear now and then that bull-baiting is but an inhuman and uncivilized sport.”

“Especially, for ladies,” said his companion. Patrick endeavoured to explain himself out of the conclusion which he had certainly induced.

“Enough,” she resumed; “the words have

been spoken, and I agree with you and I do not. Use and the fashions of countries have much to do, if they have not all to do, with questions like this; and I have passed my childhood and girlhood in a country where ladies with blood-royal in their veins sit out exhibitions of the king of the pastures, which engage him in contests, not with dogs, at the risk of his being scratched, but with armed men, on horseback and a-foot, under the certainty of his being slain before the game is over."

If Patrick had a doubt of the seemliness of a lady being present at a bull-bait, these assertions removed it; but in fact it was nearly impossible that such a doubt, at least in any strong shape, could have possessed his mind; for from his childhood he too had seen the gentler sex of every rank attend such displays, nor had he been able to advance before his habits and his age, like Touchstone, so as to express his astonishment that "rib-breaking should be sport for ladies." But still fearful that he might be supposed to have ventured a reproof on the subject, he was about saying something very conciliating, when the approach of the Mayor of Bull-ring to open the amuse-

ments of the day, once more compelled him to be silent.

A squeaking trumpet and a dull-sounding drum, beaten with one stick, were heard behind the seats at his back, and then along the private passage which flanked them. Treble acclaims filled the air. The rude door of the passage leading into the ring opened, and preceded by trumpeter and drummer, and by his bailiffs, and followed by his sheriffs, the Mayor approached his chair of authority.

His bailiffs, his sheriffs, and himself, were habited and appointed so as to give a grotesque, yet showy imitation of the real authorities of the city, whose names they usurped. He wore a red flowing gown trimmed with ermine, and much more embroidered than its prototype; his ample peruke descended over his shoulders; enormous muslin bands pended from beneath his chin, and his white wand was clasped with dignity in his right-hand, while his left led on his beauty Maud. One of his bailiffs, both attired like him in extravagant emulation of their realities, carried his huge mock-sword of office; the right shoulder of the other groaned under a mace, of which the top was a heavy block of wood, uncouthly carved

into the likeness of a bull's head, and covered with Dutch-foil; the smart cocked-hats, swords, and whole costume of his sheriffs, were still copies of their proper originals, (though in better taste, for the young bachelors who enacted these parts paid much attention to the gentility of their appearance;) and even the masking trumpeter had on the uniform of him of the city corps, who always ran, swelling his cheeks and making a wretched noise, before the true Mayor of the loyal guild, and before each Judge of assize upon his arrival in the town: and the youth who smote the wet sheepskin of the drum with one stick, was a mumming caricature of the old man who always attended the chairing of a member of Parliament at elections.

And thus attended and caparisoned, the Mayor of Bull-ring stepped up to his high chair with gravity and dignity; his sheriffs occupied their stalls at his left-hand; his bailiffs stood with the sword and mace on the ground beneath, and the trumpeter forthwith issued proclamation to begin "the noble game of bull-baiting."

CHAPTER XII.

“HEAR ye ! hear ye ! hear ye ! all good men of bull-ring !” cried the trumpeter : “ by virtue of his high and excellent office, and in honour and perpetuation of ancient times and customs, his Worship Mr. Mayor now wills and commands that the noble game of bull-bait be here and forthwith opened.”

A good-humoured cheer, mingled with laughter, testified general consent and approbation of the Mayor’s orders, and of the mock solemnity in which his crier made this proclamation. The trumpeter continued :—

“ And first, it is his Worship’s will and pleasure that the laws and regulations of bull-ring be well understood by all his subjects, to the effect following :—

“ The noble game to commence by slipping one dog at a time against Sir Bull, till all the

dogs entered take their turn ; and first dog first, and last dog last, according to the order of the book of entry.

“ Then such dogs as shall have legs to stand on, are to attack Sir Bull in a body, for the *melée*.

“ Any two or more dogs that forget their proper enemy to fight amongst themselves, shall be withdrawn from the *melée* by their masters, and not suffered to take to the ring again.

“ No dog that has not been duly and lawfully entered shall encounter Sir Bull during this day's bait ; and if a dog transgress this law, he shall be dealt with according to the judgment and sentence of Mr. Mayor, even to extremity.

“ There is no appeal allowed from the decisions of Mr. Mayor, whether in the awarding of praise or blame to the dogs, or in punishing them, as has been last proclaimed.

“ And now, valour and good fortune to all good dogs of bull-ring, and may the best win the day—God save the King and Mr. Mayor !”

While the crier adorned the close of his proclamation by a new flourish on his trumpet, to which the vapid drum and the resumed shouts of the people made answer, Patrick's fair friend said, “ A timely warning in the two last man-

dates to all such as dare dream of slipping an unprivileged dog."

"We shall see," answered Patrick. In fact, her first hint to him on this point had not been forgotten, and she now spoke with a smiling sarcasm which piqued him still more. He remembered, also, that he had come to the bull-bait, and brought Brann with him, chiefly because John Gernon had commanded both to stay away; and the refusal of the man of the book to enter his name for "a turn at the bull," to say nothing of the insults he had afterwards suffered, farther tempted Patrick to form a will of his own on the subject.

A description of the day's amusement may now be expected; but notwithstanding that such an exhibition was called fashionable in England and in Ireland about one hundred and thirty years ago, and that therefore even a lady's presence at it in those days must necessarily be excused by us, it is not intended to proceed with the sport under the eyes of more refined and enlightened spectators of either sex. The fortunes of many poor dogs, therefore, as one by one they rushed to encounter the now enraged object of their unprovoked hostility, must remain dead to fame or to commiseration. But

events are connected with one or two dogs in particular, which may palliate some slight allusions to the proceedings of the ring.

It was the arrangement, that the masters of the combatants should lead them in pairs to the little enclosure sacred to the man of the book, in order that while one dog was engaged, another might be ready, bristling with excited fury, to take his place in case of overthrow, or when the time allotted for a single attack should have expired. About an hour after the baiting commenced, the handsome countryman before alluded to, was called into the ring by name, along with another privileged person—his name sounding loyal, as Patrick's companion observed,—to wit, John Johnson. With a loud and hearty "Here I am!" he vaulted over the barrier, showing an agility remarkable in a man of above forty, and then walked towards the secretary, his mastiff led by a chain, with a step and an air which would have been deemed courtly and gallant in a person of birth and station. Having entered the secretary's stall along with his comrade, he stood close under Patrick's seat, his head upon a level with the palings over which the latter leaned; but before turning round to face the bull, he offered to

Patrick, and much surprised him by so doing, a secret, smiling, and shrewd glance, and then pulled off his hat and bowed graciously to the young lady at Patrick's side, who, notwithstanding her self-command, and what the crowd called her audacity, blushed to her eyes, and looked confounded at the compliment. His politeness, in both cases, did not seem to be noticed by the multitude, so intent were they in watching the fate of the dog then clinging to the bull.

That dog was disposed of; John Johnson's comrade hallooed his at the enraged and bleeding animal, and John himself was warned to stand prepared for seconding his immediate predecessor.

"She's a staunch, true-blooded bitch now engaged," he remarked, turning to Patrick, "and I need to be in no hurry to loosen the chain from my own mastiff's collar."

Patrick made the man no answer. In fact, he had noticed his zeal against him during the contest with the secretary, and not suspecting its quality, as shrewder observers had done, wondered at John Johnson's insolence in daring to address him so familiarly.

"'Tis a great pity your own fine hound

came too late for a tilt to-day, Sir," continued Johnson, as innocently as if nothing had happened.

Still Patrick was silent, and now showed, by his brow, how offended he chose to be.

"He has the true ould drop in him, I warrant," pursued his new acquaintance, turning his back upon the ring, and confronting Patrick, with his legs widely extended, and his arms folded hard, while the mastiff's chain was held tight in one hand.

"And you—you, Sir, have the boldness of the devil in you, I think," retorted Patrick.

"Oh, never mind me; there is little harm in me at any rate, whatever I may say or do, master; only, of a certainty, I never saw a finer ould Irish stag-hound than the one that jumped after you into the ring awhile ago; and I say again, 'tis a thousand pities he is not allowed to show what he can do against the bull."

"Mind your own dog and your own business, friend, or 'tis like that you also may have to complain of losing a chance this bait."

"How so, Sir?" asked Johnson, smiling incredulously, and not changing his position.

"Were your eyes turned in the direction

they ought to be, you need not ask, man; I tell you, that your comrade's dog is down, and that the Mayor, after looking to note how idly you engage yourself here,—and particularly with one whom he loves not,—has loosed his own bitch, and is now slipping her at Sir Bull."

"Ay, do you tell me so?" said Johnson, at last turning slowly round: "'Tis the truth, as I am a sinner.—Hollo, Mr. Mayor! what is your Worship pleased to be about? Sure, my turn is come now."

"It *was* your turn," answered the Mayor, from his place of high estate,—"*it was* your turn some minutes ago; but you have permitted the time to pass without loosening your dog, and that gives me *my* turn, to your discredit for the day."

"But is this good bull-ring law, please your Worship?" remonstrated Johnson; "sure it was not in the proclamations, Mr. Mayor?"

"'Tis good bull-ring law, notwithstanding, Sir Idler. So, halloo, Maud, dearee!" and at these words Mr. Mayor let go his bitch of the atrocious countenance, and with one bound she gained the ring, and with another the bull. Shouts of applause at their Mayor's decision,

and at the gallant attack of his favourite, burst from the spectators ; while John Johnson raised his hands and shrugged his shoulders, seemingly in patient resignation to a sentence, from which, according to the trumpeter, there was no appeal.

“ You foretold my luck, of a certainty, Sir,” he resumed to Patrick.

“ And after all your brass-faced hardihood towards me, since you came hither, and before you came hither, will you tamely bow to the hard judgment passed upon you ?” demanded Patrick, now inclined, while he scolded him, to take the man’s part : first, because his case of grievance resembled his own ; second, because he suspected that the Mayor had thus punished him, chiefly in consequence of having observed Johnson in seemingly familiar intercourse with a detested person,—namely, Patrick’s self.

“ Why, you see, Sir, this much was in the proclamation, of a certainty,—that if any dog runs at Sir Bull against rules, he is to be dealt with, even to extremity—to the death, mayhap,” replied Johnson.

“ Pshaw ! they durst not harm a hair of your dog’s tail,” continued Patrick,—“ nor of mine either, if I choose to slip him.”

“But you would not slip him, of a certainty, on the risk, Sir?”

“Would I not?” Patrick’s eye kindled as he glanced towards the bull, and he stooped and engaged himself with Brann’s collar. At Maud’s first onset, she attempted, with consummate instinct, to seize the bull’s lip; the only grip, could she have taken it, which, as is known, can quell the animal’s spirit. By a sudden jerk of his head, he baffled her, and for her own safety she was then prompted to fasten on him as she could, and accordingly made sure of one of his ears. Thus tortured, the poor bull, unable to use his horns, strove to shake her off by tossing his head from side to side, or to cast her under his hoofs and trample on her; but he strove in vain. And this wretched struggle had been going on between them during Patrick’s and Johnson’s resumed discourse, until, just as Patrick spoke the last words, Maud was flung off by her indignant foe,—not without carrying her own token of his ear with her, however,—and fell a heavy fall, nearly at the foot of the Mayor’s throne, and for a moment lay motionless.

“Would I not?” vauntingly demanded Patrick.

“ I do not advise you,” said Johnson gravely.

“ Ay, by my namesake Saint and Ireland’s patron, but I will, though, Sir ! And since you want the courage, see out this question of both our rights, my master.”

“ Do not,” exhorted his new friend.

“ Do not,” whispered his fair protectress gravely.

“ Nay, but lady fair, *you* did not so admonish me a while ago ; and now I say, with Mr. Mayor, ’tis too late to preach me up patience,” replied Patrick, nothing but his hand now holding down the impatient Brann.

“ She is not worsted, my beauty is not, and comes to herself within time !” cried the Mayor, who with his sheriffs had descended to comfort Maud ; “ and so, she is entitled to have her turn out. To him again, pet !” and he encouraged her with a preparatory and affectionate chuck under the chin.

“ Not before her master !” exclaimed Patrick.
“ Up and off, Brann, you Irishman !”

“ Still I say do not, Patrick O’Burke,” again said the young lady, gently touching Patrick’s shoulder ; but this new warning, though it startled him, came indeed too late, for Brann had bounded into the ring.

“Holy Mother, Madam! you know me?” Patrick began to inquire, but what ensued left him no farther time for asking questions or receiving answers.

The Mayor had caught a glance of his proceedings just before he released his hound, and bellowing forth, “What’s to do now!—the rules broken through by an unentered dog? Punish him, Maud! pay him! give him his fairing!” he let loose his bitch at her well-known foe of the previous day. It was at the same instant that Patrick gave Brann his parting exhortation; the animals, rushing in nearly opposite directions, encountered each other in a shock. Without a snap at either side, the mere weight and gravity of Brann sent Maud rolling on the stones, and instantly taking advantage of her exposed condition, he returned her the caress in the throat with which she had obliged him about the same hour the day before; and keeping her down with his paws, and by virtue of his tenfold strength, strove as hard for a *bon-bouche* of her “sweet body” as ever she had striven for one of his. The Mayor of Bull-ring, suspecting how the battle would go, hastened with his officers great and small to part the combatants, at the same time calling authoritatively

upon Patrick to take away "his hound of hell!" Patrick, however, did not stir, and a few seconds more decided the contest. Ere he quite gained the dogs, the Mayor heard Maud utter for the first time in her life growling admissions of inconvenience, and saw Brann's long jaws making short gnawing snaps without parting his teeth; and at John Gernon's next step, Brann bounded away from his unhappy victim, flinging something out of his mouth, as if in detestation, although in rage and triumph. "My poor Maud, is that the way with you at last?" inquired John, standing over her. She answered him by one horribly-loving glare of her unlovely eyes, rolled from her back to her side, and was very dead.

This seemed enough, and more than enough, to arouse the utmost wrath of her disconsolate master against her destroyer and his owner. But turning to look for Brann, the Mayor saw him in the act of perpetrating if possible a more deadly offence—achieving the very feat which the late Maud had failed in accomplishing: in fact, Brann was fast in the bull's lip, and the lowered head, dropped tail, relaxed frame, closing eye, and even low cries of the fine animal, told

the fact, and the strange and to us unaccountable fact, that under this seemingly slight injury, his wrath, his courage, his strength, his very nature, had abandoned him.

The moment he beheld the sight, John Geron snatched his ponderous and dangerous mace from the mock bailiff who bore it, and crying out, "Kill the curse-o'-God hound! Upon him, all good men of Bull-ring! beat out his brains! crush every bone in his skin!" raised the almost unwieldable weapon over Brann's head, who noticed him not, so intent was he upon Sir Bull's lip.

"Never while I live, base churl, shall you harm a dog of mine!" was Patrick's mode of objection, in words, to this speech; his demur, in action, being a spring from where he sat to the side of the incensed Mayor of Bull-ring, with his small sword a second time naked in his hand. But he was spared the necessity of immediate exercise of his determined valour. John Johnson anticipated his descent upon John Geron by one of his own—although even a stopwatch could scarce have measured his claim to precedence—and while he said, "Tut, tut, your Worship, do not slay one of the last brutes of

his kind that we have in the country," seized the formidable mace in its very downward progress upon Brann's unconscious head.

Gernon, after one unsuccessful though well-meant tug and struggle to free the mace, measured his new opponent with an enraged and courageous glance, and while both still had their straining hands on the—heavy mallet it must be called, croaked out, "Whoever you are, you are strong, ay, and tall too, and a strapping fellow, as it is called; but will you agree that we fling this mace to the ground, and, while it rests there, try a fall in wrestling with me, to see who shall pick it up—the two best falls out of three to decide the dispute?"

"With all my heart, Mr. Mayor," assented Johnson.

"I doubt you," resumed Gernon, still eyeing him: "Swear that you mean fair if I loose my hold of the handle of the mace."

"It needs not that I swear to make you loose your hold, Mr. Mayor, if occasion required, yet I will do as you ask. See here—" and he suddenly relinquished his grasp of the contested weapon, and rushing past the bull to the market-cross, took off his hat, bowed his head, bent his knee, laid his hand upon the long-neglected

test of good faith, and added, "By this holy and blessed cross! I will do nought, and attempt nought, in the trial between us, but what your own terms prescribe; that is, wrestle with you for two falls out of three to decide our little dispute."

"I knew it! I knew it!" shouted Gernon; "another disguised Papist!" the people readily seconding him, indeed beforehand with him, while they witnessed Johnson's old-fashioned form of asserting his honourable intentions, caught up the cant word of the Mayor of Bull-ring, and assailed the self-betrayed Catholic with loud revilings. "And shall I strive with him as with a generous foe?" demanded Gernon, appealing to the populace; "shall I foolishly hazard life against the hidden skein of the rebel?" This was not faint-heartedness, but a sincere conviction that all Papists were unfair and treacherous adversaries. He was clamorously exhorted by the people not to engage with Johnson, but rather to have him seized and disarmed of his concealed weapons, as the man he abetted was doomed to be deprived of his more evident small-sword.

"Assist me, then, liege subjects!" exclaimed the Mayor of Bull-ring, making a spring upon

the mace which yet lay on the ground. But Johnson again anticipated him, snatching it up before he could touch it, and whirling it, like an hazel-stick, in one hand, round his head, while he stood alone at Patrick O'Burke's side.

“Rescue your Mayor, men of Bull-ring!” shouted Gernon; and his sheriffs, bailiffs, trumpeter, drummer, and secretary, rallied around him, in the first instance. But one of the clauses of the proclamation of the legitimate town-crier, for the upholding of good-order that morning, had been, that all visitors of the bull-ring should go thither unarmed; and consequently the odds which now faced Patrick and Johnson had but hands, or else unimportant missiles in them, to oppose to the naked small-sword of the one and the well-managed and ominous club of the other. They therefore stood still, even with Gernon at their head, after an ostentatious show of zeal; and the insulted and despised authority of the bull-ring had to extend his appeal to more of his admiring subjects outside the barrier.

“I'll tell you what we must do now,” whispered Johnson to Patrick: “I, as well as his Worship, have a friend or two (working men on my bit of ground) among the crowd; and for fear of

an unkind reception here to-day, God knows but they may carry something or other about them : so I'll just whistle for them—the poor fellows know my note, it calls them home to their meals many a time—and when they clear the boards, along with Gernon's cronies, half of them will be at your service (supposing that I give them another hint) in the secretary's stall nigh-hand to you, and half of them at mine inside his Worship's snug enclosure; and then—but I can say no more, only this—"whistling—" "if you have the wits I think you have, I have said enough—do what you can, at all events."

From the moment he began to speak, Gernon's reinforcement tumbled, three and four at a time, over the main barrier, and Johnson was compelled to interrupt himself, as they mustered within the ring. He interrupted himself, however, to some purpose. His whistle, as he had modestly premised, was indeed heard and known by his humble friends; for about ten or twelve men pushed vehemently through the crowd, as it escaped him, gained the arena of battle almost as soon as the allies of the Mayor of Bull-ring, and at first unsuspected for enemies against the power that was, continued their violent scramble forward, till they sur-

rounded John Johnson, even before Gernon had formed a junction with his own new-comers.

Simultaneously with their movements, two, nay, three, unexpected abettors took the field for Patrick. For many minutes previously he had been almost sure that he heard the half-hoarse, half-screaming, and altogether unearthly voice of old Rory Laherty expending itself at the rear of the crowd in unintelligible, though extravagant, outcries; and that of John Sharpe, issuing from his face, still punctually fixed in its last-described predicament, uttering a variety of authoritative threats, curses, and sarcasms, more audible than the accents of Rory, because he was much nearer to the ring; both now increased their vociferations to the utmost, even for them; exerted all their decaying strength; and while John Sharp won his way by pompous proclamation of who and what he was, in name, in station, in loyalty, and in service in the field; and Rory Laherty, by his strange and terrifying cries, clapping his hands, kicking, and even biting, both contrived to clear the barrier and gain Patrick's side, just at the moment, as has been said, that his colleague, Johnson, saw himself encircled by his faithful workmen. And scarcely had Sharpe

slapped his new protégée on the shoulder, and Rory jumped up to kiss his cheek, than the provident pair of followers, doubtless having reckoned the chances of the day, produced each a pistol from his pocket.

It remains to introduce the third unhopedor ally of Patrick. During all this bustle, the three strangers announced by Kit Holmes, of the King's Arms, had been standing up in their places, evidently interested to an extraordinary degree; and the gentleman and the more comely of the ladies conversed earnestly, and with much animation, together. A moment before the arrival of Johnson's and Patrick's friends, and the mustering of Gernon's near to the outward enclosure, their words were as follow:—

“He cannot be sufficiently protected, though—” the lady spoke—“his opponents double, nay, treble his supporters!”

“And now I see that they do,” replied the gentleman; “and so an end to incognito, even though it cost me something—certain detection, belike, as an armed Papist, in this Northern town, with you to take care of, too, Dorcas, you wild-bird.—No matter; he has me at his elbow, in the name of old times and old blood!”—And with the encouragement of

“That’s like yourself, Philip!” from the spirited lady, the hitherto cautious gentleman let fall his cumbrous cloak, drew his sword,—a more effective one than Patrick’s,—and the next moment was as good as his word; that is, standing at Patrick’s side; and more than that, shaking his hand, warmly and smilingly.

“Baron of Crana!” said Patrick, in a suppressed, though very much surprised tone of voice.

“Hush, man!” whispered in turn his old friend; “for the present, know me only as your seconder against this peevish rabble, and I will tell you why at our leisure.”

CHAPTER XIII.

INDEED, farther conversation, distinct from the business to be attended to, was impracticable between Patrick and Philip of Crana; for, even while they spoke the few hasty words already noted, John Gernon was eagerly instructing his subjects in what manner to make a successful onset, and Johnson also interrupted the friends.

“Do not make any delay, Master,” he said to Patrick, “in getting yourself, your servants, the new-comer, and the half of my followers, who are already at your side, into the place I told you of. See! only wait another minute or so, and it will be out of your power to do it,” pointing to Gernon’s side of the ring.

“You speak to the purpose,” answered Patrick; he whispered a word to the young Baron, to Rory, and Sharpe, and was imme-

diately followed by them and the men, over whom the countryman had given him temporary command, to the enclosure alluded to. The rush forward seemed to be construed into an attack, in the first instance, by Gernon and his numerous abettors ; for they checked their own motion towards the disturbers of the bull-ring, and steadily awaited the expected assault. But when Patrick only led his band into the well-secured stall of the secretary, and there packed them close, while they presented a semicircular front, defined by the planks and palings which enclosed them, vexation succeeded to menace upon Gernon's brow, at the gaining of this advantage in position over him.

“ Neighbours, there is *your* stand now,” whispered Johnson to the portion of his people, who remained at his side. He pointed to the second interior barrier round the seats of the Mayor and Sheriffs ; he spoke almost before Patrick had secured his own stand ; and ere Gernon could possibly have recovered his self-possession, after Patrick's manœuvre, he saw these men racing across the ring, like dogs of chase, tumbling themselves into his sanctuary of power and office, and presenting a second

curving front, while their aspects were dangerous, though not much agitated, and each held his right-hand in his bosom, or else under the folds of his heavy outside coat.

To the surprise of all, of friends and foes, Johnson himself did not, however, move from his place in the ring. He stood quite alone, within a few paces of the bull, and the still tenacious Brann, shouldering the Mayor's mace with his right-hand, and letting his left-arm fall tranquilly at his side. His figure was upright; his whole air quiet; he even continued to smile; and yet, no one that looked upon him but felt a strange sense of his superiority.

"A word before a blow, now, Mayor of Bull-ring," he said, in an even voice, the instant the two interior barriers had been occupied;—"And, stop that man!" he continued, more commandingly, pointing to one whom Gernon was sending out of the ring, after some secret instructions. "Stop him! I advise you; send no message to bring down red-coats on us here, or you may rue it!" The emissary stood still of his own accord.—"Look! Master Patrick O'Burke, his servants, and the strange gentleman at his elbow, are well armed; so am I, and yourself will not deny as much, Mr.

Mayor:" he smiled again, waving the mace round his head. "You don't know, of a certainty, and how can I tell, what my own poor fellows—being in fear of their Papist lives at this loyal bull-baiting—may be touching the present moment with the tips of their fingers; so, your Worship sees, that if you do send for the soldiers, there is like to be blood lost before they can arrive, and none of it at our side; nay, even suppose them on the ground, who can tell, I ask again, at which side the most may be let loose, after all?"

"Is this to be borne?" cried Gernon:—"Good lads of Bull-ring, shall we bear it? Braved and bearded on our ground, upon our own day, by a handful of scurvy rebels? The bachelor boys!—the bachelors! as I have bid you,"—turning to the hesitating courier,—
"Ay, and before they come, mayhap it may be shown that we can do without them. Care not for a Papist sword or two, men, or for a Papist bullet."

"Papist bullet! ye speak a lie there, Johnny, dearee," interrupted John Sharpe.

"Tear up the street stones,—tear down the stakes and boards,—any thing, I say—any thing!"

“Keep silence!” roared Johnson, as the excited mob shouted fiercely in reply.

“And upon that fellow first,” resumed Geronon, pointing to him.

“Ay?” questioned Johnson, stepping quickly behind the bull, and drawing a large clasp-knife, “will ye, so? Look here! I do not stand alone in this open ring—I have a good second-er. Tear up one stone, or tear down one stave, and, by the blessed cross!—(I swear that oath again, to please ye)—I will cut the bull’s rope, keeping safe behind him—and as he will run ahead of a certainty, straight upon his own Mayor and liege subjects, and as I can escape, meantime, to one or other party of my friends, then must ye all have something to do, without minding us, till ye have slit his throat or pulled out his horns!”

The courage of the assaulters was much affected by this threat. They stood still, looking at each other, or whispering, and there was comparative silence, which John Sharpe broke by one of his laughs, while he addressed Johnson in intended eulogy and approbation—“Ugh, hu!—jewel you are, mon; pet you are; and it’s your notion, I like, lad; troth, jest.”

“Shame on you, old John Sharpe, to stand

there, armed against good and loyal people, by the side of Papists," said Gernon, now once more coolly, and as if loss of time had become an advantage to him rather than a grievance.

"You said that afore, or a thing like it, dearee," answered Sharpe; "and, upon the same, I gave a bit o' my mind til you; and now I say til you agin, there is na Papistry here to arm for, but crying wrong, the whilk must have justice; troth, ay."

"And do ye not yet know, Sharpe, although you had the time to learn since yesterday, that Papists, with arms in their hands, even if they commit no other crime, are traitors against the law?"

"No, hinny; not even since yasterday have I learnt as much; and I dinna think that your ain sel learnt it in your yesterday's lesson, dearee."

"Though *you* may learn it to-day, by heavens!" retorted Gernon, glancing over the heads of the crowd towards that quarter of the town which contained the barracks.

"Get awa' wi ye, ye deevil's darling!" exclaimed Sharpe, losing all temper, though such an accident was rare with him, at the same time that he hastily removed his pipe from between

his teeth, for the first time in the memory of his friends—"What bully's words are these?—Papists!—show me ae Papist fit to hauld a candle til ye, for deevilry, and all manner of raugues ways, or to any mon that taks your part, and I will shun him as I would an east wind.—Papists!—by the pipe, as good a race never cam o' your ain blood, Johnny, nathless that it is a new thaught that you put into my head—and you talk, do ye, and scare us wi' disarming, and fining, and banishing, and what not, do ye?—and my guid master's child—for a child he is til him—is to be treated in this fashion? He is, is he? Then hear what I tell you, Johnny Gernon—as sure as you, or any mon for ye, does this injustice, in the name o' Protestanteesm, so sure I, John Sharpe, will forswear ye a', root and branch, and go til the mass-house, itsel, with Master Patrick, the next sabbath at morn."

This self-important threat, from which may be deduced the essence of John Sharpe's religious rancour at all times, produced a laugh from the crowd, in which Gernon contemptuously joined, while he again glanced up the street of the town. Johnson, who had been attentively watching him, spoke.

“ I know why you look over your shoulder, Mr. Mayor, and why you would now gain time, without either trying your strength on us, or letting us go our ways in peace. But have a care of yourself, man : you are the peace-breaker here. Your bull-ring law is no law of the land, and the young gentleman who disregarded it by slipping his hound at the bull, never gave you warrant, thereby, to raise your mace over the poor brute’s head. And if it is against the law for Papists to go armed, lawful authority alone, under the sign-manual of a magistrate, is sufficient to disarm them. Wherefore listen to plain and good advice—Ah, your humble servant, Mr. Miles Pendergast !” looking up and bowing to a window of the street in which that gentleman suddenly appeared, his face and manner showing much agitation—“ You are a loyal Protestant gentleman, Sir, and well known for a just man, ay, and a kind one, and you are come just in time to give judgment on what I say.”

“ You need not tell me a long story, friend,” said Pendergast ; “ I have heard true account of that which has happened here, and I come to intreat or command all of my family, who hear me, to hasten to my peaceable home by my

side, and to exhort any who would detain them, that by so doing the laws of the land must be outraged instead of being upheld; moreover, for the content of very loyal minds, I pledge my word, that no Catholic over whom I possess influence or power shall from this day go armed."

"And I was only going to say, under correction of your opinion, words much like the words you have said, Sir," resumed Johnson; "with this little addition only, that if John Gernon and his mob now refuse free departure to any man or woman who may choose to leave this ring, it will lie at his own peril."

"Doubtless," agreed Pendergast, contemplating the legal liability only, and not suspecting Johnson's hidden threat.

"Mr. Miles Pendergast," Gernon began, very unwilling to forego a public revenge on his own ground, for what he thought many and great provocations; but Pendergast stopped him.

"Silence, Gernon! and keep the King's peace here—here, where, from your holiday popularity, you are heavily responsible.—And you, Patrick O'Burke, leave that place you stand in, and pass over the seats at your back, to meet me in the street.—As for you, Laherty, and you,

Sharpe, make your own way as you can, and face me when you dare for this disobedience.—Gernon, your objections will be useless ; I have been able, before I hastened hither, to stop your bachelors, Sir ; so, if you have any wrong to redress, seek it at the hands of the law ;” and Mr. Pendergast left the window.

“ And perhaps I may,” muttered Gernon.

“ Brann first !” cried Patrick, joining Johnson. Their united exertions soon disengaged him, though very unwillingly, from the bull. “ Go back now, and meet Miles Pendergast,” counselled Johnson ; “ I stay here to watch you free of the ring, and fear nought for me.”

“ But I will remember you,” answered Patrick. He again joined the Baron of Crana. It has been forgotten to be mentioned, that the two ladies under the young nobleman’s charge had stepped over the boards before which they sat at the beginning of the disturbance, assisted by him, and stood at the back of the phalanx wedged together in the Sheriffs’ stall.

“ Do not return to your inn, at least to rest there,” intreated Patrick ; “ Mr. Pendergast’s roof will better protect you ; and you know him, since our first meeting, and may remember

that of him which will leave you no dislike of his company, or misgivings of his hospitality."

Philip of Crana at once adopted this counsel. Patrick led the fair-haired lady (whose scoffing smiles of almost all the passages of the adventure had not yet left her lips and eyes) over the planks behind them, much in the same direction by which she had approached the ring. Her protector followed with the little "dark ladie." Rory Laherty, moaning at his master's ominous words, and John Sharpe, silent and grim, but chopfallen too, followed in their train, the spectators, through whom they bustled, standing up sullenly to let them pass; and all soon stood before Mr. Pendergast, who was ready mounted in the street, holding a second horse for Patrick.

Mr. Pendergast was prepared to meet even Patrick with a severe brow: when, perceiving him in the company of the Baron and his ladies, his looks changed into those of mixed surprise, curiosity, and interest, and he involuntarily held his hat in his hand, and bowed low in his saddle, changing his regards from one to another of the strangers.

"An old friend of our's, Sir," said Patrick,

observing that his patron's recollections had failed him—"The Baron of Crana," pointing to that individual who trod close behind.

Pendergast's features brightened, and with much warmth and urbanity he held out his hand to the young nobleman, as he greeted him. Still his eyes wandered to Patrick's temporary charge, and Patrick made an effort to continue to deport himself as master of the ceremonies.

"You will excuse me, Madam, but, as I believe I am necessitated to announce you to my respected friend, and my best friend too, I pray you instruct me how it may well be done. Am I to say—" continued Patrick, his throat swelling against the probability, and his heart slightly failing him—"am I to say the Baron of Crana's lady?"

The lady, whose hand he still touched, after leading her down the planks, drew back a little way from him, fixed her eyes upon his in good-humoured surprise, and then bent her head towards her breast to laugh.

"My sister, Patrick," said Philip of Crana, who had overheard the roundabout question, and he now advanced with her to Pendergast. "My sister, Lady Dorcas Walshe," he continued, "of whom, if my memory does not fail

me, you both have heard me speak, gentlemen, at a certain abstemious breakfast of our's in a wood Southward; and her friend, much esteemed by her and me," he went on, turning to the second lady, "Mistress Louise Danville."

After gracious salutations, Pendergast, his eye straying beyond the group, said, "Your excuses, Lady Dorcas, while I speak one necessary word, here—So, Laherty,—so, Sharpe,—come forward, foolish men."

Rory advanced, beginning to clap his hands, and otherwise evincing a deep, true, and yet ostentatious sorrow; John Sharpe, with a slightly bravading air, under which, for the sake of independence, he strove to hide some conscientious regrets, and not a little fear of his resolute master. John held his body and head as erect as if he were on parade, made his hands adhere to his thighs, stepped short and firm, and while his red-selvedged grey eyes sought the ground, sucked his pipe rapidly. "For Master O'Burke, on account of his youth, and because I but lightly warned him against this adventure at my leaving home this morning, there may be some excuse," continued Mr. Pendergast: "but for ye, men, both stricken in years, if not matured in prudence, and to whom I gave the

strictest charge to guard your young master against all future rencontre with Gernon—for ye, what shall be said—or what have ye to say, or to attempt to say, for yourselves?”

“Just naething, so please your Honour, have I to say for mysel’,” answered Sharpe, only irked for the moment at the inconsiderable and extraneous chance of being thus arraigned by Rory Laherty’s side, and, as it were, placed upon his level, as well in personal importance as in the commission of crime.—“Just naething, only this—that I never gave the lad encouragement to betake him til the bull-ring, nor even knew of his so doing, till after he had left us; and then it seemed til me ae duty I owed you and him to trudge after him, and save him, as, under God, has been done, from the dangers he might encounter in an unprotected state; troth, jest, your Honour.”

“You, Rory?” questioned Pendergast, scarce able to suppress the smile which John’s sturdy and yet crafty defence provoked on the features of all the other hearers, except Mistress Louise. But Rory would answer nothing, only hasten, by unaccented laments and strange gestures, to abandon himself to despair.

“I can say the same for that afflicted creature whilk I have said for my ain sel’,” resumed

Sharpe, his contempt of his humble brother becoming lost in his notions of patronizing him.

Patrick assured Mr. Pendergast that Sharpe had spoken truly ; that he had communicated his intention of visiting the bull-ring neither to him nor to Rory Laherty ; that no one could be more surprised than he himself was to discover them among the crowd ; and he submitted that their devoted anxiety in following him, to guard him, as John Sharpe had said, against danger, merited the approbation rather than the anger of their kind master. “ My sins be upon my own head, Sir, but forgive my excellent protectors,” continued Patrick.

They accordingly obtained their pardon, though with a shake of Pendergast’s head which hinted doubt of the past and the present, and a reservation for the future. A few words from Patrick then gave his patron to understand the claim on his hospitality preferred by Philip of Crana, at which Mr. Pendergast expressed the pleasure he really felt ; agreeing with Patrick that, after what had occurred in the bull-ring, it would indeed be better for the strangers to accept the shelter of his roof in preference to that of the “ King’s Arms.” And in order to save even all the moments possible, Sharpe and

Rory were dispatched at utmost speed to pay Mr. Kit Holmes for the entertainment he had already afforded to his "great man from foreign parts, with two ladies of his family," and to stand prepared at the inn-door with their horses, in order that they might mount and make for Pendergast Hall immediately upon gaining the loyal caravansary, after slowly walking up a steep street which led to it.

Having alighted from his horse, Mr. Pendergast's offer of his arm to Lady Dorcas Walshe was accepted, while he slung his bridle over the other. Imitating him, Patrick proffered a similar politeness to Mistress Louise Danville. She stepped back, curtsied low, and seemed to decline the civility with an expression which was partly one of pride, partly that of embarrassed inexperience. When Philip Walshe addressed a few cheerful words to her, however, also tendering his arm, she no longer objected, but, supported by a gentleman at either side, followed Lady Dorcas and Mr. Pendergast up the street.

"And now, O'Burke," said the Baron, "our amiable friend between us will excuse us a question and answer or so, for the sake of old times. —Will you not, Louise?" he demanded of her in

French. She bowed her head, and sighed, in a kind of constrained humility.

“To begin, then, Patrick, you and Brann have thriven apace, since last I met you, in this Protestant air, upon heretical drink, (something better, I hope, than we had at breakfast once on a time,) and heretical viands.”

“Would you have us never be a man and a dog?” said Patrick, echoing the good-humour in which he was accosted.

“No ; provided that you had imbibed good rosy-faced Catholic bumpers, eaten prime Catholic venison and smaller game ; and that Brann had fared on the crumbs of your table, while both inhaled orthodox Catholic breezes, and ran free over Catholic meadows and hill-sides.”

“Then you pronounce us miracles of man and dog for our opportunities : but having such a disrelish for our climate, our earth’s surface, and the dinner you get to-day, why are you found amongst us, Baron ?”

“Ask the winds, or rather the whirlwinds, and the waves, or rather the mountains of salt-water, which, without consulting us, sent Dorcas, her sweet friend, and myself into one of your iron-ribbed Northern ports, instead of suf-

fering us to land upon the sandy carpet of a more Southern cove, Master O'Burke."

"Wrecked near at hand?" asked Patrick.

"Or almost; and sailing from Spain, whither I had lately gone to convey Dorcas home to her own country."

"Where Lady Dorcas had rested since our last meeting in my father's wood?"

"Yes; though I had not purposed that she should stay away so long. But, in little more than a year after I parted you in the South, certain knaves so much occupied my time, and so disagreeably too, that for her own sake I left her where she was, well protected in her convent; and afterwards, until my troubles were over, I had interest to obtain for her as good protection out of it, in the family of a lady of the Spanish court."

"Your troubles?—I grieve to hear that."

"But need not wonder, if your retired life and loyal company-keeping have informed you of the spirit of the times. You heard me tell to Miles Pendergast, at that breakfast, (still I must undergo a qualm at the remembering it,) the nature of my title to my estate."

"And remember what I heard. During your father's life, your elder brother, Roger,

was outlawed, at Meath. Had he lived after your father, and so stood in nominal possession, but for a day, of your father's estate, it would have become attainted in consequence, and so pass for ever from you and your's: I cannot readily forget facts so like those which make myself a beggar. But he was slain before your father's death at the battle of Hillsborough, here in the North; your father, though he fell at the Boyne, fell without having upon him the legal taint cast on Roger; and for that reason, died seized of an unconfiscated estate; and to you, who also escaped law and outlawry, and whose name, if I mistake not, is included in the Limerick Treaty—to you the estate passed according to the established laws and usages of inheritance."

"Harangued like a prophet come to judgment," resumed Philip of Crana: "Now attend. What you have delivered was plain as the blessed light of day; and in the faces of foes and friends, I took possession, after a short visit to Dorcas in Spain, of the old castle, bowling-green, and acres. But, observe you, there soon started up men who averred the thing was not clear, but, on the contrary, obscured and doubtful. My brother Roger did

not die at Hillsborough, they said, before my father; but rather escaped from that affair to France, a little wounded, and there expired—in truth, they hinted, was hanged for certain mal-practices, some months after the glorious decease of my brave father; and this, they said, they could prove; and after burrowing among the paper-lumber of I know not what offices in Dublin and Paris, they cited your friend Philip to a high-trial of the question, in the city first mentioned.”

“Where you met them?” demanded Patrick.

“Whither I went to meet them, but did not so quickly as you would have it. By some score devices and knaveries, which, I thank my God, I know little of, they contrived to postpone the trial, from term to term, from year to year, on pretence of being disappointed of certain proof, deemed ready to their hand, when they cited me. But at last the day of battle came; and although, in the outset, they laid down such a story as startled even my own self, by the help of Heaven, good Catholic prayers and plain justice, my advocates talked and swore them down, and I was confirmed in possession of my plain right.”

“Well, Baron, notwithstanding the trouble,

this will permit you to sit in peace under a roof of your father's for the future, as your worst enemy cannot dream of shaking a judgment of so new a date," said Patrick.

"If one were found base enough to attempt the wrong, Baron of Crana," demanded Mistress Louise Danville, suddenly looking up into his face—"would he still be allowed to cite you to another trial, and put your title in fresh peril by a show of false evidence?" She spoke these words in English of good construction, a soft and thick pronunciation solely indicating her foreign tongue.

"By St. Patrick, and I fear so, Louise!" answered the Baron; and after his answer, she again bent her head to her breast, and relapsed into her usual silence.

"But pass we that, piously hoping no such chance is in store for us.—And now, Patrick, chiefly to apply my long story. You have heard the reasons which kept your sincere friend Philip of Crana from removing his only sister out of Spain till a few weeks ago; and you will also conceive them, in good faith and kind heart, to be the reasons which hindered him from taking a journey Northward, to visit a young growing giant of his acquaintance. In

truth, O'Burke, nothing but the fear of not being left a house to bid you welcome to, could have made the long break in our friendship—(is it not friendship, and shall it not be such?) which must have so much surprised you.”

“Grieved me, only,” answered Patrick, “but your explanation sets all at rest.”

“I will bribe you farther to forgive me, man: I ventured to the bull-bait to-day solely in the hope of chancing upon you there, after missing you at your good protector’s house; for, although bent on hiding my face—and my sword too—while passing through your Papist-hating province, I could not be so near the last of the O’Burkes without hazarding somewhat to take him by the hand, and ask him to come and see me in the old castle we have won, a second time, from confiscation and what not.”

“Came to the bull-bait to-day to meet me at it!” inquired Patrick, in good-humour, and yet recollecting something he had felt, “And why not know me there, when you met me there?”

“Very plainly, O'Burke, because I did not see you there during the lapse of time I am sure you now speak of;—you forget, that although I wished well to catch a sight of you,

under direction, perhaps, of some town-gossip at my side, still it behoved me to avoid possible detection, as a Papist wearing a sword, by the acute people of your Northern country; and in consequence I glanced not towards you as the hero of a bull-ring brawl, until chance showed me your features, (little altered at about twenty, from what they were at fourteen, and I suppose an equality of fortune makes the standing likeness) upon the verge of the moment that was drawing you into your last difficulty with his Worship, Mr. Mayor."

CHAPTER XIV.

AT the last words of the Baron of Crana, Pendergast and Lady Dorcas gained the entrance door of the King's Arms, and their followers were compelled to end their present dialogue in consequence. John Sharpe and Rory Laherty appeared ostentatiously holding the horses of the young Baron and the ladies under his protection, although their proper servants stood near at hand idle for something to do, because they had been deprived of their wonted office by the zeal of the emissaries specially dispatched to fill it upon this occasion. Yet there was a manifest difference in the energy displayed by the two temporary grooms. Rory Laherty held and controlled the horse under his care with the self-abandoning devotion of one who might think himself immeasurably honoured, if not discharging an agreeable penance,

in the performance of his imposed duty ; John Sharpe chucked the bridle of his charge, and often spoke high and reprehensively to it, as if he went through a task beneath his rank in the world, and yet would faithfully speed it, for obedience sake, and love of his master ; and, farther, knew what he was about better than any living creature could tell him.

The Baron of Crana, his sister, her friend, Pendergast, and Patrick, all now gained their saddles, and moved for Pendergast-hall ; Mr. Christopher Holmes, who had appeared so elated with his visitors, while making his speech at the bull-ring, scarcely coming to his door to bid them a farewell, so much had his altered view of their politics, or of the likelihood of their stopping under his hospitable roof, or perhaps both views together, modified his professional interest in their regard.

A short time after the arrival of the party at Pendergast's mansion, they sat down to an abundant, though, in consequence of the short notice received by the cook, not an epicurean dinner.

The table was covered with substantial dishes, and all had taken their places, when a rapid and uncertain foot challenged attention outside

the door, and, unannounced, Father James started into the room. He appeared in his usual, indeed invariable suit of thread-bare brown broad-cloth; his pale and pursy visage much disturbed since his recent rencontre with the Mayor of Bull-ring and his odious familiar; his paunch hanging neglectedly under his wide waistcoat; his whole person slovenly; his whole air unsettled; and his hands, earnestly rubbing each other, inside and outside, and back again. Stopping short at the door, he advanced with his habitual and unmeaning tender of homage to Mr. Pendergast; but, at a sidelong glance of the strangers round the board, almost jumped, and showed symptoms of outcry, or of retreat, or of both.

Philip of Crana recognised him at a look, and strove to give him confidence by a greeting, half jocular, half respectful, and wholly warm. Pendergast and Patrick also addressed words of re-assurance to the fitful priest; and after much more hesitation, he at last dropped into a seat, and composed himself, in a degree, to be helped to food and drink.

The conversation at dinner naturally turned upon the events of the day. Pendergast required and received a more circumstantial ac-

count of all that had happened at the bull-ring before his arrival than he had been able to obtain on his way thither in the streets of the town ; Philip of Crana, his sister, and Patrick, alternately giving him information in their different spirit and styles.

Contrary to his habits, Father James, at the first mention of Gernon and his bitch, lent a greedy ear to the discourse, and with a terrified, though now not vague face, glanced from one to another of the speakers, sighed or groaned deeply, turned on his chair, uttered ejaculations, and even proposed some questions.

The matter of the whole relation, which appeared peculiarly to interest Mr. Pendergast, was the conduct, seemingly so inconsistent in its beginning and ending, of John Johnson, the farmer. " I should have liked to have seen him," he said.

" But you did, Sir," answered Philip of Crana ; and thereupon added, that the man in question was the same who had somewhat familiarly addressed Pendergast, when he appeared at the window.

" Indeed ! that is still stranger."

" But I am glad of the chance ; for you can

tell us who he is, and I cannot help feeling some admiration of the fellow."

Pendergast stated that, before the moment he had addressed him, he had never seen Johnson to his knowledge in his life; "And that is what makes him a subject of curiosity to me," he continued: "I do not think so remarkable a man could be my neighbour, even for a short time, without falling under my notice, particularly as his actions at the bull-bait, and especially before the market-cross, proclaim a Catholic; and a Catholic farmer, in this Protestant county, would be a well-known man. Oh, he cannot belong to us: and then, how and where did he meet me, to know me so well, and give me such a good character?"

"I hope the poor Papist may get home safe," observed Lady Dorcas, "and that there is no corporation law of the city to punish him for the old-fashioned oath he swore."

"No, Madam," replied Pendergast; "there, I am sure, he is free, though I am not so sure that other laws, of more importance than corporate ones, may not overtake him on his road homewards, if they do not prevent his leaving the town."

"Heaven knows there are enough of them,

newly made, to do either one thing or the other," said Lady Dorcas.

"New laws against poor Catholics, please your gracious Ladyship?" demanded Father James.

"Against poor and rich, Father."

"Oh, the Lord keep us! the Lord pity us! the Lord have mercy on us!" he groaned, turned up his eyes, and smote his thighs.—"And all since the Treaty, did you say, Madam?"

"All since the Treaty,—the broken Treaty, Sir,—though I have not said so before."

"And against the poor priests, too?"

With a polite gesture of entreaty to Lady Dorcas, Mr. Pendergast answered this question, first entering upon a preamble, however.

"Good Sir, do me the favour of attending seriously to me;" he addressed the priest.

"Doubtless, Mr. Pendergast,—doubtless, Sir,"—and Father James bent forward with an interest, indeed gaping interest, joined to his usual show of extreme respect to his patron.

"You have heard recounted what happened to-day in the town, Mr. James——."

"I have, Sir,—I have, to my great sorrow."

"The which places many, if not all, of the persons present, in some danger."

“Not me—I have done nothing—I was not in the town to-day, of all blessed days in the year.—Let them prove it!—let them prove it!”—his old tremors began to return.

“Upon no such grounds will *you* be exposed to inconvenience, Sir; but, I pray you, still to give me a patient and serious hearing.”

“I will, Mr. Pendergast—I do—God knows I do—He will judge for me—He knows my heart!”

“Then, Sir, this is the point. To-morrow morning, if not to-night, I fear we may all expect a visit from some persons deputed by the legal authorities of the city—”

“Yes, Sir;—Oh, the Lord look down on us!”

“These persons may search the house, upon one pretext or another. In that case, they must encounter you, Mr. James—”

“Me, Sir? why me, I ask again? my hands are clear of it—I know nought of it—I—”

“But I have only said that, in passing through the house, our expected visitors must certainly meet with you, good Sir—”

“No, never: they shall not. I will leave the house ere they come!--Thanks, worthy

patron, for many a year of protection, and for kindness, great kindness, since the hour I crossed your threshold—thanks, excellent Sir.” He held out his hand timidly, after standing up, and tears ran down his cheeks. Pendergast, with a pitying smile, advanced to him, and accepted his greeting.—“But,” continued Father James, “I shall never stay here to bring down trouble on your head. The laws are made again—the dogs are out again—and I must have a start of them on the mountains—”

“Mr. James, Mr. James !” interrupted Pendergast, “moderate these unnecessary, and indeed childish transports. Sit down and hear me, and what I had to say—pray sit, Sir.” He half-forced him into his chair, and continued, “There is no danger threatened to me through you ; none ; and give ear to the reason ; because you are not known as a Catholic clergyman in my house—”

“Oh, am I not ! am I not !” lamented the priest, his accusing thoughts vaguely reverting to Gernon and the scene in the grounds the day before. Pendergast grew alarmed at the manner in which he uttered these words, and resumed in a graver and more impressive tone :—

“Assuredly not, Sir, as I know of. If, indeed, it were noised abroad that I sheltered a Catholic priest—”

“Oh! what would they do to you then, Sir! what would they do to you then?”

“I should then certainly lie open to legal pains and penalties, Protestant though I be, Mr. James.—Nay, Sir, I entreat you to hear me speak. The trouble to me I think little of, compared with what you would be liable to in case of detection,” Pendergast now continued, in the hope of making the priest’s terrors work in favour of a course of conduct he wished him to adopt. “It is high time, Mr. James, that you learn your true situation. Hitherto, it has been hidden from you, out of care for your happiness, and in reliance upon your prudence; but now know, that ever since the year 1698—”

“Yes—ay—Oh, God look down upon us! —1698—yes—when was that, Sir? what year of the Lord was that?”

“Ever since then a law of banishment against all men of your religion, in orders, has been passed, and rigorously executed. The said year had not lapsed without seeing four hundred and

upwards of your brethren shipped for foreign lands."

"The poor priests! the poor hunted priests! Four hundred and upwards! The Lord guide them safe across the sea! God pity them, and us that stay behind them!"

"You that stay behind doubtless require the aid of Heaven to shield you from detection."

"Yes, Sir, and pray for it every morning, noon, and night, upon our knees; and for our good protectors, and hiders, and benefactors, beseeching the Lord to grant them, in return, the grace to find out the true way, and the true church—"

"Mr. James, answer me: do you know what you stand exposed to if discovered to be a priest under my roof, after evading the law of banishment?"

Father James did not clearly know, but he conjectured some bodily constraint and punishment.

"Death, Sir! And now, for the last time, pray compel yourself to understand the tendency of all this discourse. When the men I spoke of come hither, do your utmost, Mr. James, to appear before them with a calm and

confident bearing: speak not till you are spoken to; control your groans and mutterings, and other signs of your great inward trouble. Above all things, in preparation for their call to-night, stir not from our table here to expose yourself to a rencontre with them in your solitary room; only, if you have left there any sure proof of your profession, hasten up-stairs this moment, return to us with the tokens, whatever they may be, and give them to Patrick O'Burke, that he may securely hide them."

"I will, Sir, I will! may Heaven reward you! I will—there is, first, my precious papers—oh, Patrick, Patrick, take good care of them!—second, my brev—no! no! no! not my breviary!—and where is that! oh, where is that!" He was running out of the room, searching his pockets.

"Stop, Sir, if it please you," cried Pendergast. The priest became fixed to the door-jamb. "Have you lost the book you speak of?"

"Oh, I trust in the Lord, no, Sir!"

"Nor, Mr. James, have you cause to fear that any person suspects your hidden calling?"

"The Lord help me, I hope not, Sir! Oh,

how could it happen, Mr. Pendergast? how, Sir, how? Oh, where is my breviary?" and he left the room.

"You, Patrick, do you doubt your poor tutor may have discovered of himself?" resumed Pendergast.

Patrick could say nothing on the subject.

"And so, Sir, you *do* expect a few visitors this evening?" asked the Baron of Crana. Pendergast answered, that from the last muttered threat of John Gernon, he made little question of the matter, to-morrow morning at the farthest.

"I wonder what they will do to us?" questioned Lady Dorcas, smiling. Her smile was returned in different expressions round the table, and silence ensued; which was broken by a single, firm, and loud knock of a bony knuckle at the parlour-door. "Enter!" cried Mr. Pendergast; and accordingly John Sharpe stepped one step inside the door, and then stood perpendicular in the growing twilight.

"Well, John?" questioned Mr. Pendergast, after he had remained an instant speechless.

"Your Honour," John began, sucking his "nose comforter"—"I can't exactly tell, Sir, what it may turn out til be; but——" he interrupted himself to discharge some moisture

which, smoke-impelled, was curving down the small channel in the middle of his nether lip, and he bent his head for the purpose, when, recollecting the presence he stood in, and the carpet beneath his feet, he became self-admonished and checked, by a short grunt which escaped him, and then he took a quick run to the open parlour-window, and there held out his head. His pipe had been necessarily displaced for an instant during this process; when he again fronted his anxious hearers, it was in its old keeping, and, again sucking it with a solicitude and rapidity, resembling those of a life-preserving surgeon trying to resuscitate a seemingly drowned man, he continued—

“I cannot jest preceesely tell, as I said, what it is like to end in; nathless, I think it my duty til acquaint your Honour——your Honour’s pardon, a moment, but she’s cross-grained this turn——” still meaning his pipe, which he a second time paused to inspire with life, by tapping his fore-finger upon the ashes at its mouth——“but, as I was a-going to say til your Honour, I’ve been watching, for the last half-hour——awa’ wi’ ye!” breaking up his narrative for the third time, to twitch off a spark which alighted upon the bridge of his nose.

“Watching what, this half hour, John Sharpe?” patiently demanded his master, for he knew him, and his habits and practices.

“Naething mair nor less than a matter of five or sax strange bodies hiding about your Honour’s grounds,” at last answered Sharpe.

“Ay? what mean you by strange bodies?”

“People not of these parts, I’ll tak’ my davy, Sir.”

“Not belonging to us, or living on our farms?”

“Belike, your Honour.”

“But resembling men from the city?”

“I will not jest eexactly be bound til say, Sir.”

“And they were hiding—that is, so demeaning themselves as to seem to shun being seen?”

“Even sae, Captain Pendergast.”

“Some of the visitors I promised you, Baron,” resumed Pendergast, addressing his guest, “sent on before more important persons to guard against escape from the house, perhaps.”

“What are we to do, Sir?—Fight?” asked the Baron.

“Fight, doubtless,” answered Sharpe.

“By no means,” answered Pendergast; “it

will prove as much as we can do to come off well by our utmost civility ; but being in my house an honoured guest, I am sure you will be said by me ;—and first, then, how shall we best dispose of the ladies ?”

“ By letting them stay where they are, to be sure, Mr. Pendergast,” answered Lady Dorcas, while she still smiled.

“ Yes,” concurred her brother, “ even Dorcas and her friend have no fears of a Mayor of Bull-ring changed into his master’s—the true town Mayor’s bailiff, I suppose.—But what do the fellows want ? What will they ask, think you ? our swords, and some shillings to drink our healths and damn the Pope in, I reckon ?”

“ Amongst other things, *your* sword, I think I may safely answer you.”

“ Here, then,” he cast it on the ground near the door—“ since I am not to use it, the scum shall never even demand it of me.—Louise, child, I have a thing to tell you,” and leading the serious, but now highly-excited young lady to a remote seat, he began to address her in a light gay strain, which she listened to, and sometimes answered with remarkable energy and interest, often shaking her head, and once or twice suddenly flashing upon him an upward glance.

“ Lady Dorcas, I grieve for the trouble you are about to be put to in this house, where I deemed you would meet shelter,” said Patrick.

“ I call it not trouble, Sir; on the contrary, I like to study these pleasing little traits of Christian love towards us; and my chief interest still is to learn what under the sun they can purpose to do to us all? Your sword, along with Philip’s, is gone of course, (I believe I foretold it;) but what after that? and, of all things, what to my friend Louise and myself?”

Pendergast had been whispering John Sharpe, who nodded approvingly and obediently, as his master pointed out at the window towards the wood, in the direction of Rory Laherty’s hut. All in the parlour were startled by vehement cries in the hall.

“ The demented creature his ain sel’,” said John Sharpe.

“ Having been surprised in his dwelling, doubtless,” observed Pendergast, “ and now escaped during the seizure of the very things we wanted to hide from notice.”

“ Nae, troth,” resumed Sharpe, looking out into the hall; “ he has them in a lump in his arms—Hauld your tongue, ye half-savage

mon!" he called out to the gamekeeper, "and come in here til his Honour."

Rory accordingly ran into the room, carrying, wrapped up in the old vestment worn by Father James while saying mass in his hut, the utensils used at the altar during that ceremony. When prevailed upon to hush his cries, and give a rational explanation of his conduct and terrors, it appeared that, although his dwelling had not yet been invaded, he apprehended it might be, in consequence of having observed suspicious persons lurking about it; and therefore, acting upon a foresight which astonished John Sharpe, he had escaped from it with the proofs of concealed Papistry it contained, the self-same articles that Mr. Pendergast had been advising with his steward to have removed to a place of safety, as the former has already hinted. But the most remarkable feature of Rory's story proved upon examination to be this; although he had caught glimpses of full as many strangers on the grounds as John Sharpe had done, they could not both have observed the same men, inasmuch as their discoveries took place at the same moment, but at a considerable distance from each other. Mr. Pendergast pronounced

it extraordinary that such a number of persons should assemble so near his house, for the purpose of making him a legal visit, and not remain together. Still he supposed they sauntered about, awaiting the arrival of their accredited leader.

He dispatched Patrick to secrete the burden under which Rory had come laden; and his protégé had scarce left the room, when new matter to be wondered at occurred. A female servant, panting for breath, and pale as a ghost, tottered in with the strange intelligence, that, while discharging some of her duties above-stairs, she had seen a man's foot protruded from under her master's bed; and there was not time to question her closer upon the subject, when horrible outcries resounded through the house, from that quarter of it inhabited by Father James, at the same time that he was heard—all concluded it was he—tumbling and striding, alternately, down-stairs into the hall. The next moment he rushed in amongst the company, quite wild with fright; and his anecdote was, that, in searching for his breviary, he had happened to fling aside the door of a closet, which he seldom opened, and there, with scarce room enough about him to contain a common-sized

figure of flesh and blood, the Priest averred that he beheld either some one lying in wait to take his life, or else an incarnation of the enemy of man.

To complete the effect of vague terror beginning to be produced by all this, Patrick re-entered the apartment, also with a hurried step and an excited visage, fixing his eyes on Mr. Pendergast, who immediately demanded,—
 “You, too, have encountered your bugbear, O’Burke?”

“No bugbear to me, Sir; but I assuredly have met a person concealed in the house.”

“And not called him before us?”

“No, Mr. Pendergast; and for reasons which you may soon understand.”

“Upon John Gernon’s arrival, I suppose;—Well, then, here he comes at last to relieve all the suspense and doubt he makes us suffer.”

Pendergast advanced to the open window, as the noise of horses, galloping at a distance, reached all in the parlour; and the evening was not yet so dark but he could see a body of mounted men, in military attire, moving at a good rate down the rough hill-road which wound to his house.

“ Now for our beads and paternosters,” said Lady Dorcas to Patrick.

“ It may be more serious play than your Ladyship reckons on,” he replied gravely. “ Pray, permit me to lead you into this retired chamber.”

“ What, Sir ! to find there a second appearance of Father James’s incarnate friend ? No, no ; my brother’s arm for me, and I beseech you not to try to affright us with your looks.”

“ I cannot communicate what I do not feel, Madam ; but *you* do not know what I mean,” said Patrick.

“ *I* feel chilly from the open window,” observed Philip Walshe, giving a slight yawn and shudder—“ So, O’Burke, a cup of claret with you.”

“ John approaches us in force,” resumed Pendergast, as the horsemen clattered into the outer yard of the mansion ; “ and still I wonder, and wonder more than ever, why he should think it necessary so to do, after having dispatched before himself some score men, from all accounts, to surround us in our fortress, and even invest it, by stealth.”

“ These matters may still more surprise you, Sir, when you see them out,” said Patrick.

“ Perhaps, O’Burke; but why do not our visitors come at once into the house? Oh! they make themselves at home, and lead their horses to the stables. Well, they are welcome; and let them have no difficulty in gaining our presence; let there be no brawling or battering at our gates and doors.—John Sharpe, go you and see that lock and bar offer them no opposition.”

“ I am spared a task sae much against my stomach, your Honour,” answered John; “ for, without encountering a gainsay, here they be, the deevil’s pet-birds.—Ah, Johnny—ah, you dearee!” he continued, accosting Gernon, who entered the parlour while he spoke.

The Mayor of Bull-ring now exhibited in the trappings of a new character. He wore his full uniform as captain of the company of “ Bachelor-boys,” over whom, it has been said, he held honoured command; and well did he become his steel cap, buff jacket, and ponderous boots. And, notwithstanding the handsome sword at his hip, and his more official badges of superiority, a sash and gorget, John carried in his hand a carabine, with a bayonet,

like the privates of his corps, three of whom followed him into the apartment,—evidently, by their looks and manner, three men picked from among their more handicraft and even-tempered fellow-soldiers, to do their captain's present work well, and as he should like it.

“A good evening, Mr. Miles Pendergast,” began Gernon, taking no notice of Sharpe's taunting salutation; and while speaking these words, he neither touched his cap nor bowed.

“Good evening, John,” answered the master of the house.

“I know you are glad to see me, Sir.”

“I am not much disturbed, John.”

“Why should you, Mr. Pendergast; all fair: and as we had a hard trot of it, though the distance is little, do you know, Sir, I feel thirsty;” and he let his heavy body drop into a seat at the table, his sword and accoutrements ringing bravely, and seized the half-empty claret-bottle which the Baron of Crana had just laid down. With scarce a glance at him, and with a smile, rather than a frown, the young Catholic aristocrat said to Patrick, who sat at his side—“Then, as I was telling you, O'Burke—but let us seek a nook”—and quietly arose, upon this finesse, from the board shared by

John Gernon, and offered his arm to his sister. The three friends then fell back from the visitors, followed by Mistress Louise; while Rory Laherty, edged round by the walls towards his foster-son, John Sharpe, remained posted upright at the door, and Mr. Pendergast sought out Father James in the corner the most remote from the now palpable objects of his horror, and with a whisper and a touch of his hand, implored him to be prudent, and fear nothing. In this situation Pendergast faced the open window, Gernon having his back to it, as also had his followers, who stood behind his chair. The window was about a man's full height from a turfy lawn. The eye of the master of the house strayed to it, and he seemed to get a glimpse, for an instant, of a roughly featured face peeping over the lower part of its frame-work into the parlour. When Pendergast looked more attentively, however, the vision, or the reality, was gone; but now he could not be deceived in the fact, that the figures of five or six men hurried across the darkening lawn at some distance from the house.

Gernon noticed, and no doubt felt, the withdrawing of Philip Walshe from the table. He

followed the motions of the haughty young nobleman with a staring eye and compressed lips. Then, however, he seemed disposed to pay him back, for the moment, some of his own cool indifference; for he also smiled before he raised a bumper of the claret to his lips, and when he had drunk it off, he pronounced it good, with a smack, and filling his glass again, handed it backwards, not turning his head, to one of his comrades, and said—"Try it, Tom, and if you speak well of it to your cronies there, who knows but they may live to taste it in their turn.—Where are you, our worthy host?" he continued, looking round the room for Mr. Pendergast—"Oh, yonder, keeping up your poor relation's spirits: well, and that's as it ought to be; blood is thicker than water: the gentleman is from far South, I reckon?"

"Certainly from the South, John."

"I thought as much; and related to you by your own blood, or through your excellent lady deceased, which, Sir? the report of the country says by your own blood, and yet I don't half believe it."

"Then you are sagacious, John, as I always deemed you to be; not by my own blood, assuredly."

“See what a guess I had, Mr. Pendergast, as you say. And you call him one Mr. James, I am told?”

Scarce able to restrain some vague fancy of the priest from breaking out into words, if not actions, Pendergast answered, “James is his name.”

“I wonder have he and I ever met before to-night.—What ails the gentleman? is he ill, Sir?” as a boding groan escaped the trembling ecclesiastic; “But it grows so dark I cannot discern his features.—Lights, old John Sharpe,” he continued, swinging himself round to that person.

“Lights, dearee?” questioned John, “lights for ye, and at your bidding? Yes, ay, to be sure, and why not? But do ye ken the kind, and the only kind, ye’ll ever get a hand frae me to help ye to? If not, I’s’e tell ye; I’d venture ane step, Johnny, inside the gate out of whilk ’tis said there’s nae return, and ane short run across the het floor o’ the same place, just to carry in a fresh-kindled faggot for your comfortable bed, hinny, troth would I; but till the time comes that I can so far help ye, ye’s’e have nae chamber-lights at your pleasure frae John Sharpe, pet.”

“Good, John,” said Gernon, laughing; “good, and like yourself, old crab-apple.—But, Mr. Pendergast, *you* will order us what we ask for, I am assured.”

“Begone this moment, John Sharpe, and fetch in the things demanded, and with your own hands; I wish not that another servant enters here, perhaps to create confusion,” said Pendergast, in a voice not to be disregarded; and with many mutterings, wrathful and bitter, and with another laugh from Gernon, in which his trusty men joined, the mortified steward was compelled to withdraw.

A silence took place in the parlour until his return, only broken by a shuffling of Father James’s feet in his corner, and by Gernon’s audible guzzling of one or two more draughts of the wine which he had praised; and it was now so dark that the faces of the company became indistinct to one another.

CHAPTER XV.

JOHN SHARPE stayed away longer than he needed to have done, supposing the articles he went to fetch arranged to his hand, and his mind and heart willing to hasten back with them, or supposing no unexpected circumstances to have otherwise engaged him. At last his step was heard, however, in the hall; light began to stream in through the half-open parlour-door, and he re-appeared, a candle in each hand, but with an expression of countenance very different from that expected of it, considering the humour in which he had gone to obey his master's commands. In fact, John's eyes danced gaily, and there was a sneering yet rejoicing smile on his lips, as, laying the candles on the table, he said to Gernon, "There, then, mother's jewel! there they be for you; and now

see what good they'll do ye; ugh, hu!" Pendergast was astonished.

But, still paying no attention to his irony, Gernon held up one of the lights in his right-hand, shaded his eyes with his left, and glanced, half-closing his eyes, to Father James's corner. The priest appeared turned faceward to the wall, his arms extended over his head, and his legs moving up and down, as if he deemed it possible to escape, by clambering upward, from the dreaded scrutiny of the man of power. It was to assume this position that he had been heard shuffling in the dark.

"What! at your prayers, good Sir?" asked Gernon, smiling; "repeating them out of book, eh?" Father James could not restrain his groans; "And you won't let me be sure, by a sight of your face, whether we are old friends or no? Well, no matter: I think I remember your back; stay as you are, if you like it, for the present.—Now, to enter on business in a regular method," continued Gernon; and thereupon he slapped the candlestick heavily on the table, pushed away with both hands the glasses and bottles near him, composed his face, hemmed, and slowly and gravely drew more than one piece of folded parchment from his pocket.

“Here they come, the terrible scraps of sheep-skin,” observed John Sharpe, chuckling; “and sure it’s our ain poor sels that shake in our ain skins at the bare sight of ’em.”

“Keep silence, Sir, unless you have grown stark mad upon the instant,” cried Pendergast.

“Well, and maybe I have; who knows? More unlikely things come to pass, your Honour, so I will hold my peace; and why not, to be sure? Let nae one give interruption to Captain Gernon; not on ae earthly account; troth, jest.”

“I find here,” said Gernon, in a sonorous, even voice, “warrant from my brother the Guild-mayor of our city, to seize upon the well-limbed and sleek-coated hunting-horse of Master Patrick O’Burke, the same being interdicted to a Papist by Act of Parliament of the present reign of our pious deliverers King William and Queen Mary, and becoming my property by payment of five pounds to the nominal owner.”

“Five pounds!” screamed Rory Laherty; “The O’Burke’s own hunter! he worth five times more as much any fair-day!”

“Yes, I think he will fetch money,” observed Gernon; “I liked his points passing well as

your young master rode down the street this morning to our bull-baiting."

"Wirra-sthrew ! wirra-sthrew !" lamented Rory.

"Keep your wild noises within your ain teeth, ye uncivilized creature," said John Sharpe, "and let him tell us a' about it ;" and he laughed again, still confidently.

"In this warrant," resumed Gernon, "is a clause, empowering me to demand and obtain the sword which the said Patrick O'Burke wore into town the morning ; as also the sporting-piece which he was seen carrying about Mr. Pendergast's grounds yesterday."

"You shall have them," said Patrick ; "there is the first-mentioned ;" he flung down his sword. "The second stands in a corner of the hall without."

"Thanks, master, I have seen it ;" John Sharpe again laughed, but said nothing.

"I told you, I believe," whispered Lady Dorcas to her disarmed knight. Patrick smiled, and glanced towards a second door almost opposite to that by which Gernon had entered, ere he answered, "He gets it quietly, indeed ;" and he and the lady continued to converse in a low tone together.

“ I find here a farther clause to secure and carry away the piece which Rory Laherty, called gamekeeper to Miles Pendergast, Esq. also appeared abroad with, yesterday,” continued Gernon.

“ You shall have that too for the seeking,” replied Patrick, raising his hands to still Rory’s cries ; “ ’tis in his hut in the wood.”

“ Yes ; let him send for it,” sneered John Sharpe.

“ Go, Tom, and order one of the men from the hall-door to secure it,” commanded Gernon : and Tom withdrew accordingly.

“ To be sure ; go, Tom ; and why not ?” continued Sharpe.

Pendergast could not at all surmise the nature of the seemingly ill-timed levity of his steward : Patrick, however, whispered to Lady Dorcas—“ The old man’s embassy for the lights has, I believe, initiated him.”

“ Rory Laherty showed a pistol in bullring to-day, I will farther thank him for that ;” Gernon went on.

“ Lay it on the table, Rory ; I know it is about you,” said Patrick ; and with continued laments Rory obeyed.

“Yes—there—lay it on the table, Rory,” echoed Sharpe.

“And, to have done with Rory Laherty—” Gernon now referred to a sealed letter, which he handed to Pendergast—“by reading this, written to your Honour by my brother the Civil Mayor of our good town, you can aid me in my duties of the night.”

“You are no longer my gamekeeper, Rory,” said Pendergast, after perusing the official note; “for here his Worship assuredly reminds me, that by an early statute of the present reign, your religion incapacitates you from holding the situation, either in my service or in that of any other person.”

“The twa-horned deevil!” ejaculated John Sharpe, in generous surprise and wrath at the manifestation of this new legal point, of which he had been ignorant—“The twa-horned deevil and his mither!—does your Honour speak the real law in that matter?” cries of downright anguish meantime escaped Rory.

Mr. Pendergast assured his steward that there was no doubt of the law of the case, and John’s visage now assumed a grim disapprobation, and a thoughtfulness, as if he seriously

debated within himself the question of religious apostacy which he had mooted, in a fit of passion, at the bull-ring.

Gernon, unmoved in the orderly discharge of his business by any thing done or said around him, proceeded to examine a second piece of parchment, and called out, not raising his head —“ Answer to your name, if so you hear me call upon you—Philip Walshe, Baron of Crana !”

“ Here, man !” and the young Baron turned spiritedly towards his challenger, in surprise, although he had expected some inconvenience from Gernon’s visit long before the bully appeared.

“ *Your sword, please your Baron’s Worship.*”

“ I wear none, fellow : that near your feet *was* mine, however.”

“ Pick it up, Willy ; ’tis worth the trouble, if I may judge from the glittering of the handle—does your Nobleness carry any concealed weapons ?”

“ By mine honour, no, Sir,” answered Philip Walshe.

“ And your honour is to be our certainty ? um !—well, let it pass current this turn. Your Honour’s servants—who will answer for them ?”

“ I will, as well as for myself : no servant of

mine has carried arms, openly or concealed, since the Limerick Treaty, which denied to them—and ratified to me, and such as me—the use of sword, gun, or pistol, to guard against the outrage of common ruffians.”

“Well; I credit you in this point too, Baron of Crana; and the more especially as the men are in the house, and can be requested to answer for themselves.—Another question, I pray you. There is a lady travelling with you, called Mistress Louise Danville?”

The young foreigner started into much energy at these words, and emphatically answering “Yes!” she advanced a step to the table.

“A very small and curious poniard, or dagger, was observed to fall from your bosom at the door of the King’s Arms, as you dismounted from your jennet this morning, Mistress,” pursued Gernon.

“Well? well?” she demanded in almost breathless haste, while her hand was plunged into the upper folds of her dress.

“You will not surely deprive the young gentlewoman of that bauble?” remonstrated Philip of Crana;—“It was her father’s—her dead father’s—the last relic of him she has

been able to obtain, and she but carries it on her person to keep it safe during our rapid journey."

Her eyes thanked her advocate most eloquently; and then fixing a look on Gernon, she said, in a low, deep, firm voice—"With life, I will never part with the little weapon!"

"I pray you, good fellow, let us ransom that, at the least," resumed Philip Walshe, advancing and laying money on the table.

"Yes; there!" added Louise, while she flung a purse after her protector's offering.

"Well; I am never averse to be civil," growled Gernon, removing the gold; "and so the poor little French gentlewoman may keep her father's plaything."

Mistress Louise retired close to her friends, smiling proudly, but her eyes were moist.

"To continue our weary task, Baron—(I pray Heaven it may ever end!)—there are the handsome horses belonging to you and the two ladies—your followers may keep their road-hacks for me; they are worth little more than the unmeaning five pounds ahead decreed by the law to be paid for all horses taken from Papists, if, indeed, they are worth so much; and I see little loyalty in losing money by any

matter of business—but, as I observed, the three pretty jennets?”

“Oh, they too may be ransomed, Mr. Mayor,” pleaded the Baron, now half-laughingly.

“No, no, they must needs pass before other eyes than mine—eyes which have taken a fancy to them perhaps; so your Honourable Baronship may as much as count them gone from you, henceforth to be engaged in ambling under more loyal loins than we can reckon your’s, or even those of the gracious gentlewoman at your side.—And now, let us see: when you and Master Patrick O’Burke are after settling with their pious Majesties, King William and Queen Mary, for the amount of Sundays upon which you have not repaired to some church of the religion by law established, to join in public worship, since the passing of the Act obliging all good subjects to do the same—why, when both are after making some such settlement, I deem I shall be empowered to declare myself disengaged from you and him.”

Philip Walshe laughed aloud at this new and by him quite unexpected demand on the part of the illustrious sovereigns whose subject he was. He knew, however, of the law under authority of which it was made, and therefore

only demanded of Gernon, half-ironically, half-jestingly, how he proposed to assess the amount of the fine ; adding, “ I think, honest John, we must needs lump it, directed by two virtuous umpires, one of your choosing, one of mine.”

“ By no means, Baron of Crana,” replied Gernon, “ as you shall see. Answer me, first, how often in your life have you been at public worship in a church of the established form ?”

“ Never, credit me, good fellow.”

“ I do ; and I warrant your two ladies will make a like answer.”

“ Be assured they will, Mr. Bull-necked—Bull-ring Major, I mean.”

“ Oh, never heed the slip of the tongue, your Noble Worship, it harms not John Gernon.” He smiled in a way that imported it might harm some one else.—“ As to Master O’Burke and his old follower, Laherty, I think I may answer for them myself, from my own knowledge and observation.”

“ You may indeed, John Gernon,” said Patrick.

“ Doubtless. Thus, then, stands our account so far. The law obliging all good men and women to repair to church every sabbath-day has been enacted nearly seven years, call it six

years, for indulgence sake. Since neither you, Baron, nor your ladies, nor your worthy young crony, and the man that was Mr. Pendergast's gamekeeper, have *ever* been at church in your lives, you cannot well have been there during the lapse of these six years. The fine for each weekly omission, for each defaulter, is twelve-pence. We count fifty-two weeks in each year, which makes fifty-two shillings, one year's neglect of the statute, incurred by said defaulter. Six years' neglect is six times that sum—to wit, three hundred and twelve shillings, or fifteen pounds twelve shillings"—John recurred to a slip of paper on which his calculations had been ready made—"now due to their gracious and pious Majesties at the hands of each law-breaker who at present hears me; and I am heard and understood by five such, and so five times the fifteen pounds twelve are, in even numbers, seventy-eight pounds; which seventy-eight pounds I claim to have paid unto me forthwith, or by virtue of this warrant," producing yet another piece of parchment, "it will become my duty to arrest said five defaulters in the King's name, and convey them to his Majesty's prison in our good town, there to abide till it is paid, and all legal expenses, such as

costs of warrant, gaol fees, bailiffs' fees, and so forth, discharged at same time.—And now, Miles Pendergast," continued Gernon, throwing aside the mask of assumed moderation, and thumping the table as he started up—"you wished me, in bull-ring to-day, to proceed with your friends according to proper authority and warrant—will these do, Sir?—will these do?" huddling his legal instruments together. "Look at them, Sir—look at them, and tell me!"

"I do not dispute their efficacy, John," answered Pendergast, glancing over them; "but, good John—"

"Good John!—Good hocus-pocus-and-my-nose-in-a-fiddle-case, and the-wind-blew-off-my-hat!" scoffed Gernon, snapping his fingers, as he used one of the select pieces of slang then in vogue among his "bachelor boys."—"Seventy-eight pounds good and current coin of their blessed Majesties' realm—that's the talk! No flour-de-louce, nor no base doubloons among it! Set the money on the table before my eyes in less than ten minutes, or to our good stone gaol your Papist cronies go, Master Miles! Ten minutes, I say, for I am tired of their evil company, and sick of the rincings of your bad claret! Meantime, let us be assured that our

business is quite sped in your house.—Where is that poor relation of your's, Mr. James, Sir? Oh, yonder, still at his devotions. Will he not turn to us a moment, even yet?"

Pendergast abandoned all other considerations rapidly to rejoin the bewildered clergyman, and once more put him on his guard, and urge him to rally his utmost prudence and self-command to meet the coming test.—“Turn, Mr. James, turn, good Sir,” he began aloud; then added in a whisper, “Turn, and be a man, or you are lost!” But his words only produced the effect of making the now nearly maniac Father James redouble his groans, and the up-and-down motion of his legs.

“I see the gentleman will not heed you, even for your whispering, Mr. Pendergast,” observed Gernon; “so stand back, Sir, and let me try my hand.—Good Mr. James, worthy Mr. James,” he continued, now close to his abhorring victim, “what troubles you, Sir? Here is nothing and nobody you should fear, for you are no concealed Papist, surely; you are no neglecter of lawful Sabbath-worship. I pray you, show us your features, excellent Mr. James, if only to look approvingly on our evening's work. Do, Sir, we pray you do.” Gernon laid his hand

gently on his shoulder once or twice. Father James at first cringed and shrunk under the touch, then suddenly dropped on his knees, with a sore, sore moan, and put his hands together in prayer, his face still turned close to the wall.—“What, Sir! you force us to be downright with you, do you?—Here then, Maud! halloo, Maud!” and he bellowed horribly at Father James’s ear, and clapped his hands, well knowing what chord he would jar, although Maud could scarce reply to his invocation with her usual promptness. Gernon’s finesse had full effect. The clergyman gave one jump upon his feet, another round to his tormenter, and stood upright and chattering before him.

“Now, Master Priest—now, Master Jesuit, where is your breviary?” still bellowed Gernon, assuming his fiercest looks. “Would you know it if you saw it!” he continued, pulling it out of his pocket, and thrusting it into the priest’s face.

“You have raised hand to God’s minister—be accursed!” suddenly exclaimed Father James, in a tone as loud as Gernon’s, and, under all the circumstances, more appalling than his; and to the increased consternation of all who heard

and saw him, the lunatic, summoning his great hidden strength as he spoke these words, raised his own ponderous hand, and with a blow felled the Mayor of Bull-ring to the ground. The next instant, before any one, friend or foe, could stop him, he rushed across the apartment, and shrieking fearfully, hurled himself through the still open window, shattering its glass and frame.

The gentlemen cried out, and hastened to the window; the ladies screamed, joined them, and closed their uplifted hands in horror. Geron scrambled to get up, commanding his two remaining men (for the person sent to order a comrade to Rory Laherty's hut had not returned) to pursue and seize the fugitive. They went out, and still he strove to arise; but it now appeared that, in addition to the stunning blow he received from the priest, his temple had sustained a severe wound as he fell, from the leg of the table, and after many efforts he again tumbled, dragging the table and all its glasses and bottles along with him. The confused crash caused the company at the window to face round; and once more, one of the ladies, Mistress Louise, screamed slightly, and Mr. Pendergast started. The second door of

the apartment was wide open, a group of strange men stood in the darkness beyond it, and the tall and powerful figure of John Johnson, the farmer, was motionless over Gernon, watching him. That instant the eye of the prostrate man met his, and after but one glance of utter surprise, John made a spring upward, with the courage and fierceness of his own deceased Maud.

“It will not avail, Gernon,” said the farmer, seizing him round the throat; “you are my prisoner, and necessitated to deliver me up your arms.”

“That’s *my* bugbear, Mr. Pendergast,” whispered Patrick, pointing to Johnson.

“And here comes a dearee o’ mine,” said John Sharpe, as a man passed him from the hall. “I will not be preceesely bound to declare which of us this pet frightened awhile ago, in some dark corner of the house,” as a second entered.—“Ay, or this jewel,—or this;” two others stepped cautiously by him.—“But yonder, doubtless, comes the poor Priest’s hooped deevil.” One of those who stood in the dark, outside the second door of the apartment, entered. “And maybe, is seconded now by the leg, and its fellow, to boot, whilk startled a good year of her life out of Jenny, the maid of the

chambers." In fact, without any ostentatious display or much noise, more than half-a-dozen of Johnson's followers unceremoniously took possession of the parlour, ranging themselves around that person. They showed no arms, and their features were as quiet as their proceedings. At the entry of each expected friend, John Sharpe laughed excessively—for him.

All this occurred in a few seconds, during which Johnson and the Captain of the Bachelor boys did not remain unemployed. The latter struggled desperately; the former shook his captive as one would shake a boy, making his heavy accoutrements to rattle, and still saying—"Of no avail, man—surrender, without another word—I do not wish to do you present bodily injury, but surrender you shall, and must. What would you attempt? your carbine lies harmless on the table—your sword lies there—" suddenly drawing it from its scabbard, flinging it aside, and then returning to John's throat the hand that had been employed in the process—"Come, come, Mayor, Captain, and guardian of bachelors, promise to be tractable, or we must make you be so—Blessed mother! can you prove so foolish?" shaking him more

angrily and furiously than before, in return for a buffet aimed at his face—"Neighbours, rid me of him till I speak to the company: tie him, but do not hurt him."

"Tie me! who dares it? What neighbours?" questioned Gernon, rolling his eyes around as the obedient men closed upon him:—"Who be these fellows? where my own bachelors?"

"Ye sent the last o' them you had waiting on ye, here, after the Priest, ye ken, hinny," answered Sharp.

"Boys! bachelor boys!" vociferated Gernon, now vainly struggling in the clutches of Johnson's friends, while Johnson himself stood free of him.

"They hear you, I little doubt," said the farmer, "but, be assured, cannot heed you. Every soul of them has been quietly secured, outside the house and in it, by this time."

"What?" questioned Sharpe, "even the puir lad sent by the Captain, for Rory's piece, to the hut-wood?"

"Even him," answered Johnson, and Sharpe was still amused—"So now, Gernon, content you; and I say again, fear no present hurt from me—in truth, no hurt at any time from

me ; you are my prisoner, only that I may send you, well guarded, to a well-built gaol, for high crimes committed against the laws of the land, man."

"What mean you?" demanded Gernon, turning his glaring eyes on Johnson, from the chair on which he now sat, bound with ropes.

"You shall know, if you do not already suspect," replied his captor ;—"Learn, for the time, however it may surprise your ear, that my only or chief business in repairing to-day to your bull-ring, from a good distance South, was to make you the King's prisoner ; and let that information end all present discourse between us."

John Gernon withdrew his eyes to fix them on the floor, and an expression of perplexity and thoughtfulness settled on his face.

"Fair ladies and genteels," resumed Johnson, addressing the more important part of the company, "I, and my poor fellows, could not be without hearing whispered this man's intentions towards all of you, in your quiet house, at your good dinner this evening ; and thereupon we thought, that while no place could better suit to make sure of him as our pri-

soner, we might also do ye a little service in the mean time: so, Mr. Miles Pendergast, a gentleman loved in every heart among us, will forgive our trespass upon his grounds in the twilight, as also our contriving to bestow ourselves, here and there under his roof, for the more securely effecting our good and lawful purposes. And now, before we go, attended by this John Gernon—for indeed we are in haste, as ye may conclude, and bound to be far beyond the interference of the framers of these warrants”—taking them up and tearing them—“ ere daybreak—before we go, I say, I wish to show any farther little service in my power to Mr. Pendergast, his adopted child, Master Patrick O’Burke, and the other gentlemen and ladies, his seeming friends, although strangers to me: here lie two small-swords—which is your’s, O’Burke’s last son?”

Patrick pointed it out. “ Take it back, then, from my hand, in token of my honour for the memory of your father, and of love for yourself:—and this must be your friend’s—let him receive it from *your* hand.

“ Hold, Patrick !” said Pendergast—“ and you will excuse me, Mr. Johnson, since, as I

can learn, such is your name. The swords have been surrendered to the warrant of the law, and must not again be touched by us without a breach of the law. 'Tis afflicting, doubtless, to see gentlemen thus disarmed ; and had it happened upon Gernon's own violence, I myself would have resisted his endeavours at the time, and I would now encourage my friends to accept the weapons from you, and be thankful accordingly. But, as matters stand, we are bound to decline your courtesy, and submit to legal enactment.—Patrick, do not handle your sword—and you, my friend, I entreat you do not,” to Philip Walshe.

Patrick bowed obediently, and the Baron shrugged his shoulders, and turned on his heel.

“ Well ; I approve your caution, Mr. Pendergast,” said Johnson, “ and it has sense and foresight in it, for your own sake, as well as for those you exhort to proper submission to the law of the land. And *I* honour the law of the land as much as any man, the which let my proceedings of this evening witness. Wherefore the pretty swords may lie where I found them.”

“ 'Thanks,” resumed Pendergast—“ and I

request of you to hear me furthermore. In making a prisoner of John Gernon, you act upon your own discretion, and doubtless well know what you are doing, Mr. Johnson. For us, we have nought to do in the matter—we dreamed not of hindering a deputy of the civil power in the discharge of his duties,—we offered him no hindrance—we gave, and we give you no aid or abetting, and we pray of you and of him to observe the same, now and hereafter.”

“ I promise faithfully for myself, Mr. Pendergast: as to my prisoner, he is scarce to be depended upon, either as a good witness in the time to come, or even as one whom it may be possible to command, after his commitment to gaol at my hands.—But I think the matter may be made surer for you. Bring in two of the bold bachelors,” he continued, speaking in a loud tone, towards the hall; and some of his own men accordingly led in the witnesses required: “ Now, please to repeat your last words, Mr. Pendergast—” that gentleman did so—“ Ye hear, ranting lads of single lives and of city courage, and ye will bear evidence to what ye hear, when ye get safe home again: and ye

may add to Mr. Pendergast's disavowal, a word from me and from my tenants and helpers ;—we admit the not having received any aiding or abetting in this house ; we admit the not having asked it, either ; nay, we admit, that what we have done, and what we mean to do, has been, and is and must be, in despite of the owner of the house, his friends, and servants, as much as in despite of your captain, of ye, and of your comrades—so take them out again :” his new orders were obeyed—“ And now, Mr. Pendergast, and fair ladies and gentlemen, still I entreat to know if there remains no little matter in which I may do you a last service ?”

“ We thank you, no, Sir,” answered Pendergast.

“ We thank ye, yes, friend—asking his Honour's pardon,” contradicted John Sharpe. He had gradually advanced from his position at the door-jaumb to the spot where Gernon sat bound, and he now spoke from a chair of his own which he had occupied close before the prisoner. “ Hearkee, Johnny, pet,” he went on, resting his hands on his knees, and stooping forward till their noses almost touched ; “ ye won't ride home wi' the handsome small-swords,

the even; nor on the handsome hunter; nor on ane of the pretty jennets; no, nor wi' the sporting pieces; nor wi' poor Rory's little pistolet, dearee; no you won't, hinny; but that's not it;—by your leave, Johnny—” he put his hand into the pocket of Gernon's leathern breeches, and drew out, first, the purse which Mistress Louise had flung on the table; and next, the handful of gold laid at Gernon's elbow by Philip Walshe—“See, here, Mr. Johnson, Sir—is your prisoner to keep this power of yallow money?”

Johnson demanded an account of the circumstances under which it came into Gernon's possession, and having heard Sharpe's explanation, decided that he certainly was not entitled to retain it.

“I thought as much, you father's own rearing,” resumed Sharpe, grinning into Gernon's face.

“It goes back to its lawful owners,” said Johnson.

Mistress Louise, with haughty energy, and the young Baron with contemptuous indifference, declared their disinclination to repossess themselves of money which had been given for

a certain purpose, and which had purchased its object.

“It’s e’en gaun astray then for want of an owner,” chuckled John Sharpe, fingering the purse and the loose pieces, where he had appealingly set them down on the table.

“Oh, no,” said Johnson, carelessly taking them up—“If Gernon’s they are to be, no man but myself has a right to take care of them for him,” and he slipped the round sum into his pocket, while Sharpe lost his pleasant expression of face, and eyed the lawgiver studiously.

“And thus my evening’s work is fairly done, and I am courteously free to make the most of the night that has closed on us, and is to follow,” continued Johnson, facing our friends in the action of one about to proffer a formal leave-taking.

“Ae moment more, friend,” entreated Sharpe, somewhat recovering his recent abstraction—“I dinna find it in my heart to part wi’ Johnny one say unsaid; and here it is, Johnny: the mass fines, dearee—the seventy-eight pounds, hinney,—*that*’s not in your pocket, is it?”

“But it shall be, or in the pocket of any accredited person who demands it in the name of

the authority which John Gernon cited in levying it," said Mr. Pendergast,—“ My visitors here assent to as much upon their own accounts. I promise to be accountable for the portions of the fine incurred by Patrick O’Burke and my late gamekeeper ; and I notice you, once more, John Gernon, that in nothing do we, of our own accord, gainsay the word of the law.”

“ A good and loyal speech to close with, Mr. Pendergast,” said Johnson ;—“ And yet,” he continued, in a low voice, approaching his seemingly unwilling host, “ although all this caution may screen yourself, to-morrow morning, I would counsel you not to leave a single Popish friend of yours to abide the questioning of our present and lately-past adventures under your honest roof, in the first light of that coming morning. You understand me, Sir ; so, enough. Our farewells come on at last.—Men, follow me with the prisoner.—Mr. Miles Pendergast, a good night.”

“ Before you go,” interrupted Pendergast, “ assist us in finding Mr. James, I pray you.”

“ He has already been looked after,” answered Johnson, “ but to no purpose ; and, credit

me, you are little likely to see him again on Northern ground, if his legs continue the good friends to him that, as I can hear, they were after his jump through the window. But again I recommend you, Sir, to offer your present guests—(and I deem I may extend the warning to your some-time gamekeeper, and even your Protestant steward, so remarkable for his abetting of Papists to-night)—no beds under your hospitable protection; yet, do as you prefer.”

“Horses for all, if needful, will be left in the stables?” asked Pendergast.

“Their own horses, Sir—how can you question it? I speak of your adopted son and his friends; your two servants may also find themselves supplied. As for me and my neighbours, John Gernon’s dismounted bachelors will yield him and me, and them, the means of a night ride Southward.”

“But those said men you speak of—how are they to be answered for?” still demanded Pendergast; and while he spoke, there was a doubtful and alarmed expression in his eye.

“Fear not that one will be missing,” Johnson replied; “not a hair of a man’s head has been hurt; you will only find them all tied

neck and heels, at different distances from each other, in various holes and corners of your house and your grounds. Look for them, and cut their cords when it pleases you," he whispered ; " though I do not believe it will be until after your friends are mounted and off.—And now, a third time, if not a fourth, farewell to this fair and noble company." He bowed all but gracefully : there was only a nameless something between his late and present manner and that of acknowledged gentility.—" Gernon, you will be close by me on the road."

" The road ?" questioned Gernon—" If you think to give a face of truth to your words ; and if, indeed, I have done ought to make me punishable by the law of the land, why not carry me straight into the town, and deliver me over to the legal authorities thereof?"

" Suppose your offence not to have been committed within their jurisdiction, Gernon?" in his turn questioned Johnson ; and, farther, suppose your friends too many there, and mine too few ; but, content you, I say, upon the word of an honest man, my conduct shall be lawfully decorous towards you in all things—even yourself, John, will not complain of it to

your father-confessor—your chaplain I mean—while the crowd are gathered to see your last exhibition.—Carry him carefully between ye,” he added to his men, and walked out of the parlour.

His submissive attendants quickly executed his commands. Gernon was lifted out now unresisting, and with him and his bearers all the strangers left the apartment.

An involuntary pause and silence ensued between the company they quitted, who did not even consult each other's eyes, until a clatter and galloping of horses was heard outside the house, dying gradually away at a distance. Then Mr. Pendergast, flinging himself in a chair, cried, “Very, very strange!” Lady Dorcas looked smiling at Patrick; Rory Laherty's lamentations were distinctly uttered; and John Sharpe's chuckle, and the Baron of Crana's indifferent, and yet mocking laugh, responded to his impotent cries.

“And what's to be proceeded with now?” inquired Lady Dorcas.

“Why, I think, Paddy O'Burke must say yes to our invitation to the old castle, whether he will or no,” said her brother.

“That must be it,” agreed Pendergast, as if his own anxious thoughts had been spoken for him.

“And without waiting for the morning, as that strange fellow said,” pursued the Baron.

“Assuredly; he, and you, and even your ladies, Baron of Crana, must to horse upon the instant—alone, I manage matters as I can,” said Pendergast.” — Patrick” — he beckoned his hand to his protégé, walking to a desk in a remote quarter of the room—“we part suddenly, Patrick, after many years of living together; but I may see you soon, or hear from you—till when, take that.” He put a little bag of gold in Patrick’s hand—“and that,”—embracing him—“son of your father, I am your friend still.”

While, with broken and low words, Patrick fitly made answer to this parting address, a loud shout arose from Rory Laherty, who had squatted himself in Priest James’s corner, and he demanded was he to be left behind? Patrick’s assurances relieved him.

“I’se e’en gae also,” John Sharpe was heard to snuffle,” as Protestant protector and guardian to the lad, for ae journey, provided that his Honour, my master, allows of the same.”

“ Do so, John ; you may chance, indeed, to be of use to the friendless boy ; but I will reckon upon your speedy return to me with an account of his safe housing in Crana castle—and now let some of us to the stables.”

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